Daily Report

Near East & South Asia

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FBIS-NES-96-078 *22 April 1996*

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Islamic Affairs

Islamic Affairs: OIC Chief Calls For End to Israeli 'Aggression' in Lebanon

LD2104151796 Riyadh SPA in English 1254 GMT 21 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Jeddah, April 21, SPA — The organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) has expressed deep anxiety over the Israeli aggression on Lebanon.

The massacre carried by Israel against the Lebanese civilians who were seeking the protection of the UN's peacekeeping forces has provided a clear evidence for the barbarism of the aggression, said Dr. Hamid Algabid, the OIC's secretary general

Dr. Algabid urged the international community to put an end for this aggression and to force Israel to comply with the Resolution 425, issued by the Security Council, that calls for Israeli immediate withdrawal from south Lebanon.

Dr Algabid also called on the OIC's member states to extend all possible relief assistance to Lebanon.

Palestinian Affairs

Palestinian Affairs: PA Sources Have 'No Information' on Kidnapped American

TA1904175796 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Hebrew 1745 GMT 19 Apr 96

[Announcer-read report]

[FBIS Translated Text] Sources in the Palestinian Authority [PA] told us that there are no signs of and no information about an American citizen being kidnapped and facing execution tomorrow. This was stated by PA sources.

Palestinian Affairs: Officials Cited on Hebron, PNC, Lebanon Attacks

JN1904154596 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1300 GMT 19 Apr 96

[Report by 'Adil al-Za'nun in Gaza]

[FBIS Translated Text] President Yasir 'Arafat said that committees are now meeting to discuss the international forces and arrangements for Israeli withdrawal from Hebron.

The president was replying to questions by journalists following the Friday prayers at the al-'Abbas Mosque in Gaza today.

The PLO Executive Committee chaired by President 'Arafat will meet in Gaza this evening. PLO Executive Committee member 'Abdallah Hurani said that the committee would discuss the necessary preparations and arrangements to convene the Palestine National Council [PNC] 22-24 April.

PNC Speaker Salim al-Za'nun said that the Palestinian side was not notified of Israel's approval of returning at least 62 PNC members. He added that Israeli high circles had ordered that the return of all PNC members be facilitated.

Al-Za'nun said he hoped the PNC would not postpone the meeting to 24 April if all members attend. He said that the Israeli aggression and the massacres that occurred in Lebanon would be discussed at the PNC meeting. He added that there was approval to bring in 100 foreign observers. The PNC includes 669 members.

Regarding the tragic events in Lebanon, Nabil Abu-Rudaynah, adviser to President Yasir 'Arafat, condemned the Israeli attack on the al-Rashidiyah refugee camp near a Palestinian position today. This attack killed Lieutenant Jabr Mahmud Nimr 'Abd-al-Jalil from the al-Karamah forces and wounded two others.

Abu-Rudaynah desribed the Israeli attack as brutal. He held the Israeli occupation forces fully responsible for the repeated attacks on Lebanese cities and villages and the Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon.

He called for a cease-fire and for immediately implementing the 1993 agreement to end the bloody events in Lebanon.

Palestinian Affairs: PFLP-GC's Jibril Vows To 'Avenge' Victims of 'Massacres'

JN1904180196 (Clandestine) Al-Quds Palestinian Arab Radio in Arabic 1330 GMT 19 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Commenting on the Zionist aggression, massacres and violations, Ahmad Jibril, secretary general of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command [PFLP-GC], made the following statement:

The barbaric massacres perpetrated by the Zionist enemy against the unarmed fraternal Lebanese people, mostly women and children, in al-Hinniyah, al-Nabatiyah, and the terrible massacre in Qana reveal the nature of this enemy and its history which is filled with crimes and massacres, including those in Dayr Yasin, Qibya, Nahhalin, Kafr Qasim, al-Samu', Bahr al-Baqar School, (Hawlah), al-Khayyam, al-'Abbasiyah, and Sabra and Shatilah. This is in addition to other massacres which stigmatized world Zionism with racism and terrorism, and violated all international values and norms and human rights charters.

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The treacherous Zionist aggression against Lebanon is a practical translation of the resolutions of the organized terrorism summit in Sharm al-Shaykh. The aggression is staged under U.S. cover and is supported by state-of-the-art weapons and techniques which the U.S. Administration put at the disposal of the Zionist entity to install it as a policemen to protect its imperialist interests in the region.

It goes without saying that the Zionist intransigence is armed with the most modern tools of extermination and terrorism against the people of the region and the liberation-seeking forces. This aggression would not have been carried out had it not been for the cover provided by the Arab regimes which trail behind the alleged peace. At a time when the U.S.-made Zionist planes were raiding our people in al-Nabatiyah al-Fawqa and those seeking shelter at the UN position in Qana, Shim'on Peres was meeting with Yasir 'Arafat to coordinate efforts to strike against Palestinian opposition forces in the Palestinian territories and cancel the Palestinian National Charter as a sacrifice for the Labor Party, led by Peres, ahead of the Knesset elections.

The large-scale Zionist aggression against Lebanon inflicted heavy losses on the Lebanese people, killed and injured hundreds, demolished thousands of houses, displaced thousands of Lebanese people, and harmed the Lebanese economy and public facilities. Peres received the green light from his visit to some Gulf countries and from the agreements he concluded with their rulers, following his meetings with Husni Mubarak in Egypt and King Husayn in Jordan and the hellish alliance he made with Turkey to undermine Syria's steadfastness, beleaguer the Islamic revolution in Iran, and eradicate the Islamic resistance in Lebanon and the popular intifadah in Palestine. All of this was done under the supervision and sponsorship of the United States, which plans to shackle the region and impose the U.S.-Zionist hegemony on it under the new world order.

Ahmad Jibril added: We in the PFLP-GC condemn the Nazi Zionist aggression against Lebanon and the massacres perpetrated against hundreds of the steadfast and patient Lebanese people. We, along with all the mujahid revolutionary forces, will avenge the pure blood and souls of the martyrs. We will continue to support our brothers in the Islamic and national resistance in the forefront confrontation trench. We will continue armed jihad and struggle until the liberation of all of Palestine and the occupied Arab territories. We will foil the Zionist-U.S. plan seeking to place hegemony on the region.

Ahmad Jibril concluded his statement by saying: We in the PFLP-GC, both leadership and cadres, extend our heartfelt condolences to our people in Lebanon. We wish the injured speedy recovery. This is a revolution until the liberation of land and man.

Palestinian Affairs: Hamas Leaflets Condemn Lebanon Operation

TA1904141296 Jerusalem JMCC PRESS SERVICE in English 1230 GMT 19 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Several leaflets were issued by Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] and the 'Izz-al-Din al-Qassam Brigades condemning the Israeli killings in southern Lebanon, supporting Hizballah, and threatening to revenge.

Following are excerpts of these leaflets:

THE CRIMINAL ZIONISTS (THE PEACE OF THE BRAVE HEROES) SWIM IN THE BLOOD OF CIVILIANS IN LEBANON

(...) We, in Al-Qassam Brigades, declare to our Palestinian, Arab and Islamic people, and to the whole world, our position to confront the Zionist terror, and our will to deter it.... We affirm the following:

First, Our total solidarity and stance alongside Hizballah mujahidin and the Islamic Resistance heroes in southern Lebanon. We affirm our total support to the jihad operations which these heroes conduct against the Zionist settlements north of occupied Palestine.

Second, Al-Qassam Brigades, as the forefront major force standing against the Zionist offensive, will not stand still watching Israel's crimes against our steadfast people in the south of Lebanon; affirming our distinguished participation to strike the Zionist terror and the inevitable great revenge by us to all of the Zionist crimes made against our people in Palestine and Lebanon.

Third, we call upon all Arab regimes, who threw themselves on the Zionist shoulders, to cleanse itself from the shame that drowned its honor and dignity by terminating its relations with Israel and the disgraced agreements it conducted with them (....)

Fourth, we condemn 'Arafat's Authority which did not react to the killing of innocents and civilians in Lebanon. As if the Zionist crimes in Lebanon's arena does not mean anything to them (....)

Fifth, we are astonished by the silence of the PA Legislative Council of not condemning the Zionist massacres in Lebanon. Or is not this included in the Council powers? Or are the Council members chained with 'Arafat's restrictions and fears of his followers (....)

Sixth, we are also astonished from the silence of the trade unions, university administrations and students

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unions against the Zionist offense. We call upon them to immediately work to organize solidarity activities and conferences condemning the Zionist invasion to the land of Lebanon (...)

Finally, we say to the Zionists... our heroes are ready... our martyrs are ready.... where will you go? where will you flee? And what can you expect?

A real response and correct treatment to eradicate the terror will not be but a burning hell and fires (....).

[Signed] 'Izz-al-Din Al-Qassam Brigades
Hamas Movement in Palestine Military Branch
Friday 19 April 1996

SALUTES TO HIZBALLAH HEROES IN THE SOUTH OF LEBANON

Israeli Operations in Southern Lebanon indicates the Zionists Cowardice and Hatred. Where are the Table Negotiators? Where are the Callers of Peace? We do not see a Call for a New Sharm al-Shaykh Summit Responding to Zionist Terror (...) As Muslims we have the right to question why when Al-Qassam Brigades stroke the Zionist entity, in response to the martyrdom of Yahya 'Ayyash, we found the entire world condemning.... but when Israel strikes civilians in the south (of Lebanon) and demolishes houses inside (Palestine) we do not find anyone, but few, condemning this act. We do not find anyone calling for a summit to impose a siege on Israel.

[FBIS Transcribed text] First, Israel is demanded to immediately stop its operations against our people in the south, or we will drown the heart of Tel Aviv with a new sea of blood through strong Hamas operations.

Second, Hizballah and Islamic Resistance heroes have the right to strike the occupied north with missiles because they are defending their land and the land of their occupied people.

Third, Israel does not have the right to strike the south of Lebanon since it does not have anything to do with Lebanese territory.

Fourth, an urgent call to the UN Security Council to end the Zionist act in the south, and an end to the sabotage and torture of the people in the West Bank and Gaza Strip — if it wished a stable Middle East.

...The matter is crystal clear of the conspiracy behind Sharm al-Shaykh summit; this summit which, in our viewpoint, was held to support Israel by some of the collaborative regimes to justify Israel's occupation of Arab land.

[Signed] 'Izz-al-Din al-Qassam Brigades

Thursday 18 April 1996

A NEW TERRORIST MASSACRE BY ZIONISTS

Here is the Zionist terrorism striking the south of Lebanon again to reveal the true face to the Zionist entity.

The killing and injury of more than 160 civilians, most of them children, women and elderly from the village of Qana in southern Lebanon, is one of the grotesque Zionist massacres.... It is a slap in the face of all those eager for peace slogans in the region.

We, in the Islamic Resistance Movement of Hamas, send our condolences to our people in Lebanon and affirm that the blood of those martyrs will not go to waste, but that the Zionists will pay a high price for it.

We call on the international community, who called for Sharm al-Shaykh few months ago to stand up for this nation who are demanding their rights and dignity from the Zionists, to urgently and speedily move to punish the Zionist entity on this crime. We in Hamas consider this crime sufficient to convince the participating sides of the settlement process with the Zionists the inviability of this process, which the people of this nation pay for its failure every day with their blood and dignity.

[Signed] Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas — Palestine
Thursday 18 April 1996

Palestinian Affairs: Russia's Primakov, Ross Phone 'Arafat on Regional Situation

JN2204084696 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 0800 GMT 22 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] President Yasir 'Arafat received telephone calls from Russian Foreign Minister Yevgeniy Primakov and U.S. peace coordinator Dennis Ross. The current situation in the region and the peaceful initiatives to end the Israeli aggression against Lebanon were discussed during the calls.

Palestinian Affairs: Hamas Plans To 'Assassinate' 'Arafat Uncovered

JN2104150196 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1300 GMT 21 Apr 96

[Report by 'Adil al-Za'nun in Gaza]

[FBIS Translated Text] Colonel Tawfiq Jabr, director general of the Palestinian General Intelligence in the southern region, disclosed the arrest of members of two Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] groups, who were planning to assassinate President Yasir 'Arafat and other Palestinian figures. At a news conference held at

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the General Intelligence headquarters in the city of Dayr al-Balah this afternoon, Col. Jabr said that during the past two weeks, the Palestinian security organs have arrested Ghanim al-Hassas, military official in charge of what is called the revenge groups belonging to the secret wing of Hamas. Muhammad Muhawish, official in charge of the central security monitoring unit of Hamas, was also arrested. Col. Jabr voiced his extreme surprise at the extent of planning carried out by these groups, who are supported by foreign parties to spread rumors and sedition in the homeland.

Col. Jabr also said that two groups here have received strange and disgusting military instructions from Ziyad al-Qishawi, who is now residing in Jordan, to monitor the motorcade of President 'Arafat at the martyrs cemetery in Gaza during his planned visit to it during 'Id al-Adha.

Mu'tazz, who is the administrative official in charge of the military group that received instructions to monitor the president's motorcade and who was allowed by intelligence officials to speak to journalists, said that three or four months ago, a letter arrived from al-Qishawi with instructions to monitor the president's motorcade during 'Id al-Adha. Mu'tazz, who was arrested by Palestinian intelligence officials, said that he and his group agreed to reject these instructions, which Mu'tazz described as inhuman and treacherous.

He pointed out that he, his group, and Khalid, the military official in charge of the group, handed themselves over to the Palestinian security organs to prevent sedition in the homeland. Mu'tazz appealed to the National Authority for pardon and release. Meanwhile, Kahlid, the military official in charge, talked about the letters the group had received from al-Qishawi in Jordan.

Col. Jabr saluted Khalid and Mu'tazz for turning themselves and the rest of their group in to the Palestinian security organs. He described the initiative as heroic and nationalistic and reiterated his pledge to build the homeland. The Palestinian General Intelligence organization displayed large quantities of electronic equipment, ammunition, explosives, and detonating devices, which were seized during search campaigns. Col. Jabr also announced that the central workshop, which was used by Hamas to make explosives and official police uniforms was also seized.

Palestinian Affairs: 'Arafat on Charter Amendment, Assassination Attempt

JN2204095896 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 0907 GMT 22 Apr 96

[Report by 'Adil al-Za'nun in Gaza]

[FBIS Translated Text] President Yasir 'Arafat expressed great surprise at Israel's failure to implement what was agreed upon and signed between the two sides. Responding to reporters' questions this morning, President 'Arafat said: We do not want to change the National Charter, but we will try to amend some of its clauses so that it is in harmony with what we agreed upon and signed in the first and second Oslo agreements.

President 'Arafat stressed that the Israeli attacks on Lebanon will undoubtedly influence the PNC session. Referring to the Israeli siege on the Palestinian territories, he noted the presence of 120,000 unemployed Palestinian workers. He said the Israelis are not honoring what was agreed upon and signed.

Regarding the abortive attempt to assassinate him, President 'Arafat said: It was not an attempt to kill me, but to kill anyone in the Palestinian leadership. They admitted this. He added that the members of the group that was planning to carry out the attempt turned themselves over to Palestinian security forces and disclosed the orders they received.

Final preparations are being made for the PNC session at al-Shawwa Cultural Center in Gaza at 1800 [1500 GMT] today. The slogans on the banners in the main conference hall stress that national Palestinian unity is the strongest weapon to achieve the Palestinian people's aims. Another banner reads "Democracy Is Our Choice and Road to the Independent Palestinian State With Holy Jerusalem as Its Capital." PNC members continue to return home. PNC Director General 'Abd-al-Ra'uf al-'Alami, Yusuf al-Jallad, and others are expected to return within hours.

Palestinian Affairs: 'Arafat—Dialogue With Hamas 'Suspended'

JN2204092396 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 0700 GMT 22 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Yasir 'Arafat, president of the National Authority and chairman of the PLO Executive Committee, said he will ask the 21st Palestine National Council [PNC], which will convene this evening, to amend the Palestinian Charter so that it is in harmony with the new developments and the Palestinian commitments to the peace process. The president said dialogue with Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] has been

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suspended because Hamas has not fulfilled or respected its commitments to the National Authority.

In a press interview, the president noted improvement in Palestinian-Syrian relations.

Palestinian Affairs: 'Arafat Chairs First Executive Committee Session in Gaza

JN2004070296 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 0500 GMT 20 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] President Yasir 'Arafat presided over the first session of the PLO Executive Committee last night in Gaza. The Executive Committee discussed the preparations for the 21st session of the Palestine National Council [PNC], which will be held in Gaza on 22 April. The Executive Committee will hold a second session today.

Many PNC members will return to the homeland today and tomorrow to take part in the PNC's 21st session. Taysir Khalid, representative of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine [DFLP] in the PLO Executive Committee, is expected to return to the homeland tomorrow at the head of the DFLP delegation, which consists of five members of the front's Political Bureau.

Taysir Qub'ah, second deputy speaker of the PNC, and 'Abd-al-Rahim Malluh, member of the PLO Executive Committee, returned to the homeland yesterday to take part in the PNC session.

Palestinian Affairs: PFLP-GC Declares 'Total Boycott' of 'Illegal' PNC Session

JN2004202696 (Clandestine) Al-Quds Palestinian Arab Radio in Arabic 1330 GMT 20 Apr 96

["Text" of "political statement" issued by the PFLP-GC; place and date not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] Under the yoke of occupation and at a time when the Zionist presence on the Palestinian territories and on Arab territories in the Golan and southern Lebanon continues and while the Zionist enemy perpetrates the most heinous massacres against women and children in heroic southern Lebanon, the limited self-rule authority called for convening a Palestine National Council [PNC] session. Since the signing of the Oslo accord, everybody has been well aware of the goal of this call. The PNC has been called into session to endorse the revocation of the Palestinian National Charter in compliance with the dictates of the Zionist occupiers and the wishes of the U.S. Administration. This move is aimed at consummating capitulation, shackling the Palestinian struggle, and confiscating the future of our generations.

The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command [PFLP-GC] would like to declare to the Arab public and to the masses of our Palestinian Arab people the following:

The PFLP-GC declares illegal any PNC meeting held under the yoke of occupation and to fulfill its dictates. Any PNC session must ensure free debate and aim to crystallize the true sentiments of the Palestinian people, whose legislative institution has lost its political and organizational legitimacy.

The PFLP-GC declares null and void all the resolutions that could be passed by the illegal PNC session. Such resolutions will not express the free wishes of the Palestinian people. As such, such resolutions will not entail any commitments to be honored by our people or our struggle.

The PFLP-GC declares that whoever attends the session slated for Monday, 22 April, will knowingly or unknowingly be viewed as a party to the conspiracy, which is targeted against our people's struggle and aimed to obliterate their sacrifices.

The PFLP-GC declares that attending the PNC session, which is aimed at endorsing dictates, is tantamount to endorsing the abandonment of the Palestinian people's rights to repatriation and self-determination. Attending such a session will also contribute to the Judaization of Jerusalem.

For all these reasons, among others, the PFLP-GC declares its total boycott of the illegal PNC session. Likewise, it declares that it will have nothing to do with any decisions or policies this session will endorse. Furthermore, it urges all strugglers to boycott this session and expose its illegality.

It is a revolution until the liberation of land and man.

[signed] The PFLP-GC

Palestinian Affairs: Hamas Urges PNC Members Not To Attend Ordinary Session

JN2004120896 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 20 Apr 96 p 36

[FBIS Translated Text] Amman — The Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas, sent a message to Palestine National Council [PNC] members, asking them not to participate in the council's ordinary session until the political prisoners in the Palestinian Authority's jails are released and all provocations against the Palestinian people in areas under the authority's control are stopped. In its message, Hamas urges the PNC members to adopt a decisive stand against attempts to cancel or amend the

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charter in any way that encroaches on the Palestinian people's historical legitimate rights.

Hamas also calls on the PNC members to stop making concessions in exchange for administrative powers — concessions that hide the problem and do not tackle its roots and that provide the Zionist enemy with opportunities for economic and political expansion in the region.

In its message, Hamas calls for defending the unity of the Palestinian people and their national cause and for rejecting attempts to divide this cause into one of Palestinians inside and Palestinians outside the diaspora. Hamas calls for reassociating the national cause with broader Arab and Islamic issues and for not confining the representation of the Palestinian people to the Palestinian self-rule authority. It also calls for rejecting the authority's attempts to make unilateral decisions on a set of issues, discussions of which had been postponed, such as the future of Jerusalem, the fate of the refugees, and the Jewish settlements that devoured huge areas of the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Hamas urges members of the self-rule council to concentrate on resisting Jewish settlement building, which is actively expanding at the expense of Palestinian territories on the pretext of bypass roads and Zionist security. Hamas calls for formulating plans and following up their implementation to defend Jerusalem and make it a focal point for gathering the Palestinians inside the homeland and in the diaspora. It calls for rejecting any attempts to bargain over Jerusalem.

Hamas also calls for a move to secure the release of all Palestinian prisoners in the jails of the occupation and the Palestinian authorities.

Palestinian Affairs: Executive Committee To Remain in Session To Follow Dialogue

JN2104071896 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 0500 GMT 21 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] His Excellency President Yasir 'Arafat presided over the meetings of the comprehensive national dialogue last night. The meetings were attended by PLO Executive Committee members, representatives of the PLO factions, independents from the Palestine National Council [PNC], and political figures. The meetings were held to prepare a final draft of common points in advance of tomorrow's PNC session.

During the council of ministers meeting, the president said that the two-thirds quorum for convening the PNC will be met.

The PLO Executive Committee met under President 'Arafat last night. It decided to remain in session to follow the PNC session and the issues of the comprehensive national dialogue, which seeks to promote and protect national unity and overcome the obstacles to the higher interests of the Palestinian people.

Palestinian Affairs: Adviser on Executive Committee, National Dialogue Meetings

JN2004215196 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1800 GMT 20 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The PLO Executive Committee resumed its meetings this afternoon under the chairmanship of President Yasir 'Arafat. The Committee will discuss the agenda of the Palestine National Council's [PNC] session scheduled for 22 April. The national dialogue committee is expected to meet in Gaza this evening. Representatives of the PLO factions and several national figures will participate. The expanded comprehensive national dialogue committee will also meet to discuss a subcommittee report, proposals, and concepts related to ways to enhance national unity and prepare for the PNC's next session scheduled for Monday [22 April]. More details are in the following dialogue our correspondent Mahmud Abu-al-Hayja' held with President Yasir 'Arafat's adviser Nabil Abu-Rudaynah:

[Begin recording] [Abu-al-Hayja'] President Yasir 'Arafat's adviser Nabil Abu-Rudaynah, good evening.

[Abu-Rudaynah] Good evening.

[Abu-al-Hayja'] Brother Nabil, will you please brief us on the progress of the national dialogue?

[Abu-Rudaynah] As you know, the comprehensive national dialogue will resume this evening following the PLO Executive Committee's meeting. President Abu-'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat] will chair the dialogue session. The PLO Executive Committee members, representatives of PLO factions, and independent members of the PNC will participate. Tonight's meeting will discuss the working paper which was worked out by the committee that was tasked by a previous meeting of the national dialogue committee with preparing a formula that will be presented to the expanded meeting. The paper includes recommendations and proposals to reach common denominators for the convening of the PNC session in Gaza. As I told you, the second open meeting of the PLO Executive Committee ended a short while ago. These meetings will remain open until the convening of the PNC session and will review all proposals and developments, including preparations for the convening of the PNC session, the national dialogue to be resumed this evening, and the regrettable events in the Lebanese arena. President Abu-'Ammar stressed his condemnation of these events and these aggressions against the

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Lebanese people. The PLO Executive Committee will issue a statement in this regard.

[Abu-al-Hayja'] Brother Nabil, you used two words for the national dialogue. They are: Comprehensive and expanded. Will personalities or forces other than those we know participate in the dialogue?

[Abu-Rudaynah] The PNC members residing abroad began arriving in the West bank. Some of them arrived in Gaza and some others are on their way from the West Bank to Gaza. The dialogue will include representatives from PLO factions. All groups in the [homeland] will also be represented. Some personalities are now arriving from abroad to attend the meetings of the comprehensive national dialogue committee.

[Abu-al-Hayja'] Thank you President Yasir 'Arafat's adviser Nabil Abu-Rudaynah.

[Abu-Rudaynah] You are welcome. [end recording]

Palestinian Affairs: PNC Acting Speaker Says Draft Charter To Be Debated

JN2104070996 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 0500 GMT 21 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Salim al-Za'nun, acting speaker of the Palestine National Council [PNC], said that the PNC's standing legal committee will consider seven draft laws to work out a new national charter. He said that the draft laws will be presented to the PNC for deliberation. Al-Za'nun added that 13 of 18 PLO Executive Committee members, which is a legal quorum, attended the meeting that resulted in the call for convening the PNC.

Palestinian Affairs: Cabinet Discusses Situation in Lebanon, PNC Session

JN2104062896 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1815 GMT 20 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] His Excellency President Yasir 'Arafat chaired the weekly meeting of the Council of Ministers in Gaza this morning. The cabinet discussed the political, security, and economic situation and a host of issues of concern to our people.

After the meeting, al-Tayyib 'Abd-al-Rahim, secretary general of the presidency, made the following statement:

His excellency the president briefed the cabinet on the situation in Lebanon. He expressed grave concern at the difficult conditions the fraternal Lebanese people are facing. He also condemned the Israeli air raids that targeted Palestinian positions in southern Lebanon over the past week. He categorically condemned the massacre perpetrated by the Israeli Army in the Lebanese town of Qana, where scores of people were martyred and injured.

The president informed the cabinet of the Palestinian position, which he conveyed to Israeli Prime Minister Shim'on Peres during their 18 April meeting. He said that he stressed the need to immediately reach a cease-fire agreement and a political solution that will ensure the implementation of the resolutions of international legitimacy as a step toward a just and comprehensive peace.

The president also briefed the cabinet on his meeting with French Foreign Minister Herve de Charette on 18 April. The president praised the distinguished French position on the situation in Lebanon and on lifting the siege against the Palestinian people. On behalf of the PLO Executive Committee, the National Authority, and the Palestinian people, President 'Arafat praised French President Jacques Chirac for his support for Palestinian and Arab rights.

The president also briefed the cabinet on preparations for the Palestine National Council special session in Gaza on 22 April. He said that the two-thirds quorum will be met.

The president gave a detailed report on his meeting with Shim'on Peres at Bayt Hanun Crossing. He summed up the results of the meeting in the following points:

1. The work of the negotiating committees should be activated.
2. The agreement on releasing prisoners should be implemented.
3. Negotiations on redeployment in Hebron and the international presence there should start.
4. Negotiations to draft an agenda for the final-stage talks should start.
5. The Palestinian rejection of land confiscation and bypass roads was emphasized.

The president said that the last meeting with the Israeli prime minister put an end to the hiatus in the political negotiations since the latest violent actions. He said that this meeting was the first political meeting since 24 February. It was a serious attempt by both parties to put the peace process back on its normal track and emphasized the need for negotiations on the final-stage solution to begin on schedule, without any obstruction.

The president also briefed the council on the security situation. He asserted that the Palestinian security agencies are continuing their campaign to confiscate unlicensed arms. The president announced that a Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] arms cache was unearthed in Jabaliyah yesterday. He noted that the cache includes 50

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grenades, Uzi machine guns, M-16's, and Israeli-made pistols. He said that the cabinet praised the efforts of the security agencies to maintain the security of the homeland and citizens and combat those who do not hesitate to open fire and throw grenades at policemen. The cabinet wished a speedy recovery to the policemen who were wounded by these outlaws.

Dr. Sa'ib 'Urayqat presented a report on the meeting that was held with the Israeli side late last week on the redeployment in Hebron and the temporary international presence there. 'Urayqat explained the president's contacts with Norway to send advance teams of Norwegian soldiers in the next few days. Norway was asked to play the role of general coordinator of the countries that will participate in the temporary international presence there. It was also asked to launch immediate contacts with the Governments of Denmark, Italy, Turkey, Australia, Canada, and the EU to form the units of the temporary international presence in Hebron. 'Urayqat also said that the Palestinian side asked the Israeli side to immediately begin the security and military committees meetings on the redeployment and transfer of authority in Hebron. [passage omitted]

Palestinian Affairs: 7 PNC Members Refuse To Return to Self-Rule Areas

JN2104100196 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 21 Apr 96 p 20

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Seven members of the Palestine National Council [PNC] refused to return to the Palestinian National Authorities' areas. They said they insist on returning to their birthplace, Jerusalem, adding that this should be one of the conditions for convening the PNC.

The members are Dr. Subhi Ghawshah, lawyer Ibrahim Bakr, Ghazi al-Husayni, Kamal al-Nimri, Nabil al-Qabalani, Dawud Muragha, and Ibrahim al-Fityani. In a cable to acting PNC Speaker Salim al-Za'nun, they asserted their right to return to Jerusalem according to the historic and inalienable rights enshrined in the UN resolutions. [passage omitted]

Palestinian Affairs: 'Urayqat Comments on Cabinet Meeting Discussions

JN2004145796 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1300 GMT 20 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The cabinet concluded its weekly meeting which was chaired by President Yasir 'Arafat in Gaza at noon today.

Following the meeting, Legislative Council member Dr. Sa'ib 'Urayqat told our radio that the cabinet discussed the outcome of President 'Arafat's meeting with Israeli Prime Minister Shim'on Peres and the results of the meeting of the Joint Higher Coordination Committee. This committee recently discussed the occupation army's redeployment in the Hebron Governorate and the international presence.

Dr. 'Urayqat added that the cabinet decided to request the Norwegian Government to play the role of general coordinator for the temporary international presence in Hebron. He said that the international force that will deploy in the city will represent Norway, Denmark, Turkey, Italy, Canada, Australia, and the European Union.

The cabinet reviewed the Israeli attacks on Lebanon. It called for a cease-fire and for ending the tragic events to which the fraternal Lebanese people are subjected.

Palestinian Affairs: 'Urayqat Claims Agreement on International Force in Hebron

TA2004133496 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1200 GMT 20 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Preparatory to the IDF's [Israel Defense Forces] redeployment in Hebron and even before the elections, the Palestinians and Israel have agreed to ask Norway to form an international force that will deploy in the city. This was disclosed by Sa'ib 'Urayqat, a member of the Palestinian Authority, to our correspondent Yoni Ben-Menahem. The international force will be composed of troops from several countries, including Canada and Australia.

Palestinian Affairs: Islamic Jihad Weapons Cache Found in Gaza

JN2004120696 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1200 GMT 20 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Palestinian security services uncovered a cache of weapons belonging to the Islamic Jihad Movement. Major General 'Abd-al-Razzaq al-Majayidah said that quantities of weapons and explosives were found this morning north of Gaza city in a hideout belonging to a fugitive Jihad Movement member. Among the items seized were quantities of toxic mercury, about 10 bombs, three handguns, an M-16 rifle equipped with a tear gas launcher, a number of fuses, a group of Kalashnikov rifles, and electronic binoculars.

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Arab-Israeli Talks

Arab-Israeli Talks: Al-Asad Reportedly Close to Agreeing To Restrain Hizballah

TA2104184596 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Hebrew 1700 GMT 21 Apr 96

[Discussion between anchor Hayim Yavin in Jerusalem and political correspondent Nisim Mish'al in the Tel Aviv studio — live]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Yavin] Nisim, is Christopher's show of confidence based on something concrete or merely aimed at maintaining the momentum? What did the government learn about al-Asad's position?

[Mish'al] The Americans sent Jerusalem two very interesting messages this evening. The first message is that Christopher hopes to return to Israel with an initial draft document of understandings. The second, no less important, message is — and I quote — that President al-Asad would be prepared for a Syrian role in restraining Hizballah beyond what it has done so far. In other words, al-Asad sends the Americans a message that he is ready to promise that all the understandings that the United States, Israel, and Syria agree on will be upheld. At this stage, al-Asad is hinting at the July 1993 understandings, but the Americans regard it as important that they extract from al-Asad an undertaking to uphold such promises. Still, the Americans believe that they will have a long, hard night in Damascus trying to get an expanded agreement of understandings.

[Yavin] So we are returning to the 1993 document of understandings, but hopefully written this time.

[Mish'al] Yes, that is correct, but in a very interesting meeting with the American peace delegation before Christopher's departure for Damascus, the Israeli team — which included the chief of staff, Uri Savir, Major General Dani Yatom, and others — said that without a firm assurance that the shelling on the northern settlements would be halted, Israel would not agree to a cease-fire. Israel also asked the Americans to get al-Asad to agree to reduce the friction between the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] and Hizballah. The Israeli team said that the agreements must contain a clause that whenever the understandings are violated, the IDF would have freedom of action to respond. In other words, Israel wants an understanding that if our soldiers in the security zone are shelled, it can respond to the sources of fire, even if they are located inside villages.

In the last few hours the atmosphere has become optimistic that Christopher will return tomorrow with something that will permit the Israeli Government to announce a cease-fire in Lebanon.

[Earlier in the newsreel, Hayim Yavin held a studio discussion with Arab Affairs correspondent Ehud Ya'ari in which Yavin said that "in the contacts between Israel and Syria it was agreed that there would be no cease-fire until understandings are reached between the sides." Ya'ari says: "It has been agreed among all the sides that there cannot be a cease-fire or lull of several days to a week before sitting down to negotiate. It must all be done in a single package," he says. "The other agreement is that the negotiations will be carried out via the Americans despite the presence of Primakov, Agnelli, and de Charette in the region. It has also been agreed by all parties that this time the understandings will be written and will be an expanded form of the July 1993 understandings. Another interesting point is that the Syrians oppose any negotiations with the Lebanese Government."]

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Egypt

Egypt: Musa Cited on Developments in Lebanon

NC2004171196 Cairo MENA in Arabic
1605 GMT 20 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 20 Apr (MENA) — Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa has announced that he placed telephone calls to U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher, Italian Foreign Minister Susanna Agnelli, who is the current chairwoman of the EU, and U.S. coordinator for the peace process Dennis Ross today as part of the current efforts to handle the Lebanese crisis.

In statements today, Musa answered a question on why the foreign ministers conference to follow up on the Sharm al-Shaykh Summit, scheduled to be held in Luxembourg tomorrow, Sunday [21 April], was postponed. He replied that it was postponed by request of the parties concerned in light of the current circumstances. He added that the meeting was not possible in light of the situation where Lebanon is being struck and shelled by Israel.

Musa emphasized that Israel's attacks on Lebanon in the last 10 days negatively affect the peace process and make the task of the peacemakers more difficult. He added that there is no doubt about this and that the attacks are considered a negative development with regard to the Middle East peace process. Commenting on some people's talk in the region that the Sharm al-Shaykh summit was responsible for Israel's deviation from peace and its attack on Lebanon, he said: This is a policy of laying the blame on others, and the issue is more profound. He added that anyone who utters such words is superficial in his thinking. The Arab world has long suffered from the policy of blaming others, he said, stressing that the issue is too serious to be left to such superficial remarks.

Musa noted that Arab public opinion is frustrated and that there is deviation from peace on the part of Israel.

He said the latest Security Council resolution did not express the Arabs' viewpoint, but it reflects the international situation and the reality of the awkward new world order. He emphasized the peacemakers' insistence on containing the situation in order to reach a reasonable and fair solution.

Musa clarified that the situation now requires that Lebanon and Syria adopt a stand on the initiatives proposed to them, noting that this issue concerns these two countries in the first place.

He said Egypt has clearly declared that it supports the Lebanese stand, whether at the Arab League or at the Security Council and that Egypt does not agree to what Israel is doing in Lebanon.

He added: We seek to contain the situation. There have been French initiatives on which there was coordination with us during the French foreign ministers' presence in Egypt and during the five-way meeting that was held at the Foreign Ministry.

He said we also know of a U.S. initiative, stressing that the issue of accepting or rejecting it has nothing to do with Egypt.

Musa said that accepting the initiatives that seek a stop to the aggression depends on Syria and Lebanon. We do not interfere in every single detail; we help when necessary, but we do not make decisions on behalf of the Syrians or the Lebanese; but it is up to them to decide whether or not they will cease fire, he said.

He pointed out that he knows that they want to get this matter over with in whatever manner agreed upon.

Asked about Hizballah's use of katyushas against Israel, Musa said: The continued Israeli occupation of south Lebanon causes frustration and situations that are sometimes uncontrollable. Some powers in or outside the region are playing certain roles, he said.

Minister Musa noted that an agreement was reached in 1993 on Katyusha attacks on north Israel and the situation in south Lebanon. That agreement is known to all Arab parties, and all these things are being examined to reach a solution to the crisis, he said.

The foreign minister stressed that none of the parties will gain from the humanitarian calamity in Lebanon, pointing out that any gain a party thinks it has achieved is a tactical gain. He stressed that there will be absolutely no strategic gains and that there are lessons everyone should learn from what happens when no attention is paid to civilians and when civilians are bombed and economic, security, and political crises emerge in a sovereign state like Lebanon.

The foreign minister said that the peace process cannot proceed and make progress when public opinion in the region is in a state of wrath. He affirmed that general anger at what happened has undoubtedly left a negative, and probably a long-term impact on the peace process and its credibility. This feeling is general, he said.

Musa said: The killing and terrorization of peaceful people cannot go on like this, particularly when civilians are involved. He recalled that he made the point at the Arab League that there is no difference between civilians on the Arab side and on the Israeli side. Civilians should not be used as instruments, and their lives should not be undermined this way, he stressed.

He was asked about the accusation of Israel being responsible for taking the peace process back to square

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one. He pointed out that the peace process is the collective responsibility of all the parties. We must not go far; peace is not an Israeli one, but an Arab-Israeli peace; therefore, the responsibility falls on all the parties, he said.

The foreign minister regretted that major states at the UN Security Council opposed the Arab draft condemning the Israeli aggression. He pointed out that abstaining from condemning Israel, giving it the green or yellow light, or diverting attention from what happened resulted in the deaths and the humanitarian crime in the village of Qana in south Lebanon.

Musa said that the world community should have acted on ethical and legal principles, pointing out that the operation is condemned whether this or that party has condemned it or not. He also stressed the need to contain the situation and return the peace process to its foundation; in other words the Madrid conference.

Musa concluded his remarks by saying that the peace process concerns both parties and that each party has its rights and duties in it. The process cannot continue otherwise, he stressed.

Egypt: Musa—Contacts Under Way With Italy on Lebanese Situation

NC1904133096 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1230 GMT 19 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa has announced that contacts are now under way between Egypt and Italy on the explosive situation in Lebanon as Italy is the current chairman of the EU. The foreign minister said arrangements are currently being made for the Italian foreign minister's visit to Cairo, due to take place tomorrow.

Egypt is holding intense contacts with all parties concerned to stop the deterioration of the situation in southern Lebanon and contain this crisis that affects the Middle East peace process.

Egypt: Jordan's al-Kabariti Makes Statement on Arrival in Cairo

NC2104102396 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0955 GMT 21 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 21 Apr (MENA)—Jordanian Prime Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti has stated that his visit to Egypt is part of constant consultations and coordination between Jordan and Egypt.

In a statement upon arrival in Cairo today, al-Kabariti said: The recent developments and circumstances are serious. By virtue of its role as a leader of the peace process, Egypt is shouldering a huge responsibility, which we respect and appreciate.

He said the purpose of his visit is to coordinate positions and deepen relations to confront the developments in the Arab world.

Asked about the Jordanian-Egyptian talks and the Israeli aggression on Lebanon, al-Kabariti said: We will discuss bilateral ties, regional relations, and developments in the Palestinian and Lebanese arenas.

On Jordan's position toward the Israeli aggression, he said the Jordanian and Egyptian positions are identical.

Egypt: Musa, Jordan's al-Kabariti Discuss Lebanese Developments

NC2104142796 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1340 GMT 21 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 21 Apr (MENA) — Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa met today with Jordanian Prime Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti and discussed mechanisms to bolster the ongoing efforts to stop further deterioration in Lebanon.

Al-Kabariti pointed out after the meeting that these mechanisms include the possibility of calling Arab meetings that might start with small-scale meetings to prepare for a large-scale meeting.

Al-Kabariti affirmed that Egypt and Jordan share the same view on events in Lebanon. He remarked that Jordanian-Egyptian relations have always been strategic and governed by a comprehensive strategic vision. All of the aspects and developments in the Lebanese crisis were discussed in the context of this united strategic vision, he said; adding that they also discussed possible mechanisms to meet the threats facing the Arab homeland, in general, and Egypt and Jordan, in particular.

Egypt: Jordan's al-Kabariti, Musa Comment on Talks

NC2104152596 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1255 GMT 21 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 21 Apr (MENA) — Jordanian Prime Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti has said that he delivered to President Husni Mubarak today a message from Jordanian monarch King Husayn. It deals with relations between the two countries and the need to bolster and strengthen them in order to confront future alternatives and developments.

Al-Kabariti added that during his meeting with President Mubarak, they discussed regional developments, particularly events on the Lebanese and Palestinian scenes.

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Concerning Jordan's views on how to end the Lebanese crisis, al-Kabariti said that he agrees with the Egyptian view that at the very least a cease-fire should be arranged to be followed by a stage in which Lebanon can establish its full authority over all its territories, the Lebanese people can exercise their rights, and Lebanon can reassume its role as an independent country and a beacon of civilization, science, and culture.

Asked if an agreement has been reached to adopt procedural steps to solve the Lebanese crisis, al-Kabariti said that procedural steps can be discussed in detail through the mediation efforts currently operating in Damascus. He remarked: We are following up on these efforts.

Asked about his recent visit to Israel, al-Kabariti said: We were briefed on the Israeli position, the Israeli impressions of the events, and the Israeli conditions to agree to a cease-fire.

Al-Kabariti affirmed that his country condemns violence, particularly attacks on civilians.

He said he hopes that the current intensive diplomatic activity will produce a cease-fire so that earnest negotiations can begin to resume the efforts to establish peace and stability in the region and help the Lebanese Government to regain its sovereignty, control, and independence.

Regarding the Arab League secretary general's call to hold an Arab summit, even a minisummit, al-Kabariti said he hopes that there will be an Arab meeting, remarking: We support every Arab meeting and back the steps made by the Arab League.

When asked if the Jordanian view is about the U.S. position that is biased toward Israel and the U.S. blocking of a Security Council condemnation of Israel, al-Kabariti said: We urge the United States, as a sponsor of the peace process, to be an impartial mediator in this issue.

Egyptian Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa welcomed al-Kabariti's visit to Cairo, saying it is a good opportunity to exchange views over the current regional events that are grave and dangerous, particularly to Lebanon.

Musa added that the visit is also an opportunity to discuss the status of the Palestinian negotiating track, a very important issue in which Egypt and Jordan are interested.

Musa said that he and al-Kabariti reviewed the peace process, particularly its current status in light of the recent events in Lebanon.

Asked about future steps, Musa said that this depends on how successful the current mediation efforts prove to be including the efforts made by U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher in connection with Syria, Israel, and Lebanon.

Regarding the contacts made by the Egyptian diplomatic establishment to solve the crisis, Musa said that the latest Egyptian contacts were with the Italian foreign minister, who is the current EU chairman. He added: We are now making room for the contacts made in Damascus and in Israel.

He noted that Christopher said before leaving Damascus for Israel that his talks in Damascus were fruitful and positive.

Musa said he hopes that a cease-fire will be reached and that Lebanon's rights and sovereignty can be preserved. He said he hopes that civilians on both sides will be protected.

The Egyptian foreign minister pointed out that it is not right to disregard UN Security Council resolution 425 which calls for Israeli withdrawal from Lebanese territory. He noted that the implementation of this resolution is a major Lebanese demand.

He said that Egypt is following with care the current mediation, is waiting for the results, and will adopt a definite position on the issue in light of these results.

'Amr Musa remarked: We are seeking a unified and strong Arab position that will back Lebanon's position in the peace process.

He added: We can never accept the assaults that have been carried out against Lebanon. No self-respecting Arab can accept that.

Musa added that all reasonable Arabs seek to preserve the peace process, the thin thread to which we are committed and which we want to preserve.

Asked if there is an Arab initiative to solve the Lebanese crisis, Musa said that there is a clear Lebanese position which was explained by the Lebanese foreign minister to the Arab League. He added that any other Arab initiatives are meaningless as long as there is a Lebanese initiative. He remarked that it is not an issue of an initiatives race.

Musa declared that the Lebanese position is sufficient, noting: We back this position and are consulting with all the parties about it. Syria and Israel are handling the issue in the context of a U.S. initiative.

He said: There was at first a French initiative submitted by the French Foreign Minister Herve de Charette when he visited Cairo and met with several Arab foreign ministers. We are now dealing with the current U.S. initiative, however.

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Egypt: Minister on Anger Against Israel, Coordination With France

JN1904162896 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1520 GMT 19 Apr 96

[Interview with Egyptian Information Minister Muhammad Safwat al-Sharif by radio correspondent Faridah al-Shubashi; place and date not given—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Al-Shubashi] Your Excellency: Observers link the terrorist attack on a number of tourists yesterday to the current developments in Palestine and Lebanon. If the Israeli practices continue, do you expect Arab popular wrath to increase in a way that will be difficult to control?

[Al-Sharif] If I were to talk about popular wrath, I would say that this Israeli aggression against Lebanon and its people as well as the strikes against innocent people, children, and residential areas in this way and intensity—strikes that did not spare even the peace-keeping troops—all this creates anger and greatly provokes public opinion.

This is because the public opinion fully rejects these things which provoke the feelings of the entire Arab nation and the Arab man in the street. Consequently, this will undoubtedly have serious repercussions.

Regarding the linkage, we cannot pass premature judgment on things, because investigations are under way and they will reveal the dimensions of the criminal operation which occurred in Cairo yesterday.

[Al-Shubashi] Your Excellency: Is Egyptian-French coordination increasing on the current crisis?

[Al-Sharif] Naturally, there is coordination between Egypt and France, especially since Presidents Mubarak and Jacques Chirac agree on various issues and levels, particularly on foreign policy. Perhaps, there was identical views regarding the French initiative on resolving the Yemeni-Eritrean problem.

The French initiative is in harmony with the Egyptian ideas and with President Mubarak's proposals. The meeting between Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa and the foreign ministers of France, Syria, and Saudi Arabia showed that the French initiative is a major element in the move to contain (?the situation).

Egypt: Parliament Demands End to Israeli Attacks

NC2204131896 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1230 GMT 22 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The People's Assembly today condemned the barbaric Israeli aggression on Lebanon, demanding an immediate end to the attacks.

The assembly issued a statement today following a meeting under the chairmanship of Speaker Fathi Surur. The statement affirmed that these events have inflamed the feelings of the free world and urged all peace-loving powers to act to stop these barbaric attacks that have terrorized powerless civilians, killed women and children, violated the provisions of the Geneva agreement on the rights of civilians in armed conflicts, and overlooked all international norms and rules.

The assembly demanded an immediate end to these attacks so that the voice of peace can be raised high.

Egypt: Party Leaders Back Lebanon's Right to Armed Struggle

NC2204121096 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1055 GMT 22 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 22 Apr (MENA)—Leaders of the political parties and popular forces in Egypt have condemned the Israeli attacks and acts against the Lebanese people, as well as the siege and starvation of the Lebanese people.

The leaders of the parties said in a statement that the Israeli practices are by all standards a kind of state terrorism that is rejected by international norms and the UN Charter.

In their statement, which was issued at the conclusion of their meetings last night, they reaffirm the right of the Lebanese, Palestinian, and Arab people in the occupied territories to resist the Israeli occupation by all means, including armed struggle.

They asked the Arab League and United Nations to take a decisive stance to deter the Israeli aggression, which threatens international peace and security.

Egypt: Al-Baz Discusses Lebanon, Libya, Terrorist Incident

NC2004064496 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2325 GMT 19 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Alexandria, 19 Apr (MENA)—Dr. Usamah al-Baz, first foreign ministry under secretary and director of the President's Office for Political Affairs, has regretted Israel's repeated aggression against south Lebanon and Palestine and its attacks on defenseless civilians.

He said Egypt is against the escalation of military operations. He noted that Israel's large-scale attacks went beyond being a reaction against Hizballah. He said President Husni Mubarak, in exchanges with U.S. President Bill Clinton, explained that the attacks went beyond all limits and turned into a serious qualitative

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escalation involving a large geographic area, noting that a large number of civilians, mostly women and children, were killed.

Dr. al-Baz condemned this Israeli conduct and called on the Israeli Government to cease fire immediately and unconditionally.

He said he hoped no Arab group will give the Israeli extremists a chance to push the Israeli Government into military action when there is no umbrella to protect civilians.

Dr. al-Baz was speaking to Alexandria journalists after attending a meeting with members of the Lions Club at the Syrian Club in Alexandria. The meeting was attended by Alexandria Governor Isma'il al-Jawsaqi.

On Egypt's position at the UN Security Council concerning Israeli aggression, Dr. al-Baz said: Our duty is to reach an understanding with the influential states on the Council so that it will issue resolutions that have an affect on the aggressor. We are not looking for just a condemnation; we want an end to all military and paramilitary operations on both sides.

Dr. al-Baz explained that severing Egypt's diplomatic relations with Israel would not be useful now because it would mean no contacts with or influence on Israel. This does not serve Arab interests, he said, pointing out that Egypt should continue to influence Israel's position and should not help Israeli extremism.

On supplying Lebanon with weapons, al-Baz said this will not have a big effect because there would be a need for training to use these weapons. He said any arms supplies will go to the Lebanese Government, not to Hizballah, which is armed and financed by Iran. He stressed that a cease-fire is the only solution to this problem.

Asked about Libya's reported production of chemical weapons and Egypt's position on this, Dr. Usamah al-Baz said President Mubarak called for discussing this subject without sensationalism or distortions.

He said Libya has said that the reports are untrue and that it is ready to receive a neutral committee from European and Arab countries to conduct inspections and make sure that the site and facilities that are allegedly being used to produce chemical weapons are not really suitable for that purpose.

Al-Baz stressed the need not to practice double standards and to give states a chance to prove what they say. He said Arab countries should not be dealt with through threats.

On the latest terrorist attack in al-Haram street in al-Jizah, Dr. Usamah al-Baz explained that the attack is criminal, serves no purpose, and cannot be justified because it is directed against the stability of the Egyptian people.

At the beginning of the meting, Dr. al-Baz stressed the need for foreign policy to serve the domestic front. He said a network of international relations should be built to serve domestic policies. He added: We must cope with massive world progress, establish bridges with the developed countries, obtain technology, and have links with the foreign world with a view to developing our own technology later.

Dr. al-Baz pointed out the need for establishing a common Arab market before thinking of a Middle East market.

Egypt: Al-Baz Comments on Israeli Operation, Sudan, Iraq

NC2104174096 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1640 GMT 21 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 21 Apr (MENA) — Dr. Usamah al-Baz, foreign ministry first under secretary and director of the president's office for political affairs, has stated that the Israeli military operation in Lebanon has shocked Egypt and the Arab world. He added that this operation has greatly harmed the peace process and has given the enemies of peace an excuse to carry out terrorist acts.

Speaking at a meeting with the Foreign Correspondents Association in Egypt today, al-Baz said that this military operation has greatly harmed Israel's relations with the Arab world. It has also harmed Israel's status in the region. He noted that since the beginning of the operation, President Husni Mubarak has held several contacts with the Lebanese and Syrian leaders. He has also sent two urgent messages to U.S. President Bill Clinton and one message to Israeli Prime Minister Shim'on Peres. President Mubarak has also held consultations with Saudi and Jordanian leaders and with Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat during his recent visit to Egypt.

Dr. al-Baz said the Israeli military operation in Lebanon has created a dangerous situation in the region, especially for the prospects for peace in the Middle East and on the Syrian and Lebanese tracks. He added that this operation is completely different from what was agreed upon during the Summit of Peacemakers in Sharm al-Shaykh and could become "fruitless and even dangerous for Israel." He explained that Israel's collective punishment of the Lebanese people is rejected. The Arab public cannot accept this behavior.

On the Eritrean-U.S. exercises that will take place shortly in the Red Sea, al-Baz said that these exercises

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had been decided upon some time ago. He expressed the hope that these exercises will not affect the status of the Hanish island. He added that the escalation of the dispute between Eritrea and Yemen will harm the whole region. He expressed the hope that the two countries will settle their dispute peacefully and without resorting to a military confrontation.

Dr. al-Baz said Sudan is a fraternal country. The Sudanese people are brothers. They and the Egyptian people are twins, but the dispute is with the policy pursued by the ruling regime in Sudan. He said Egypt believes that sanctions that could harm the Sudanese people's strategic interests and make their life more miserable should not be imposed. He affirmed that Egypt does not favor such sanctions, especially imposing an arms ban, because this could lead to the partition of Sudan. This completely conflicts with the vital goals of the Sudanese, be they in the north or in the south. He added that economic sanctions will make life more difficult and more miserable for the Sudanese people, who are considered a fraternal people and twins of the Egyptian people.

Dr. al-Baz asserted that Egypt opposes any solution that could partition the Arab world, whether in Sudan or Iraq. He affirmed that Egypt will not allow the partition of Iraq because this could create a Shiite line extending from Iran to southern Lebanon.

Egypt: Al-Baz Comments on Sharm al-Shaykh Summit, Arab Unity

NC2004123996 Cairo MENA in Arabic
1140 GMT 20 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 20 Apr (MENA)—Dr. Usamah al-Baz, Foreign Ministry first under secretary and director of the President's Office for Political Affairs, has affirmed that the peacemakers summit that was held in Sharm al-Shaykh has achieved its goals. We were careful to demand that Israel complete negotiations with the other Arab states and preserve what has been accomplished in the Palestinian issue, he said, adding: The summit's goal was not to fight terrorism, which exists in many Arab and European states; it was to consolidate the security of all the parties concerned and to fight violence and terrorism as one of the forms of violence.

Al-Baz was responding to questions by the members of the Lions club at a meeting held last night in the Syrian club.

Asked whether the dream of Arab unity has died forever, al-Baz replied that the dream has not died and that it is still there. This will take time, because unity is not achieved by emotions, he said, adding that this should be done calmly so that we can overcome the hardships facing us in the same way the Europeans did. They started in 1957, but only accomplished something at the end of last year, he said.

Commenting on the ties some Arab states are establishing with Israel, al-Baz said that every Arab states is entitled to pursue its own policy. We have no right to interfere, because some states might want to build bridges with Israel to serve the interests of peace. It is up to every individual state to do what suits it, he remarked.

Egypt: Suspects in Tourist Attack Arrested

NC2004151396 Cairo MENA in English
1350 GMT 20 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Cairo, April 20 (MENA) — The security forces have already arrested a number of suspects who are believed to be involved in the terrorist attack which took place in Europa hotel on Thursday [18 April] claiming the lives of 18 Greeks and the injury of 15 others, a senior security official said today.

Investigations are currently held to know the suspects' relations with the attack, Assistant Interior Minister Major General Ra'uf al-Manawi told Greek reporters.

At a news conference held here, Major General al-Manwai said that Thursday's attack is considered one of the biggest terrorist attacks which targeted tourists in Egypt.

The security official voiced his hope that the perpetrators would be nabbed within the few coming days, noting that the Greek tourists were not the target.

Major General al-Manawi denied reports claiming that the terrorist group had a map of the hotel. Asked whether the Greek tourists or other groups were the target of the attack, al-Manawi said he could not determine such matter, noting that there are several possibilities that the Greek people were not the target, pointing out that searching operations are continuous to reveal the truth.

Asked if the attack has a relation with the current situation in South Lebanon, the security official said that this is none of the tracks of investigations to be followed.

The fact is that there was a crime and innocent people were killed, he added.

Asked if there are contacts between the perpetrators and Hizballah or any other group, he said that terrorist groups are somehow linked and there are contacts between each other. They have common goals in different countries where they are stationed, he added.

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Asked if the security authorities fear the so-called suicide groups, major General al-Manawi said that these operations are not consistent with the nature of the Egyptian people.

The security body was capable of controlling the situation over the past three years, he added, noting that such suicide attacks do not take place in Egypt and it is difficult to accept or imagine the occurrence of suicide bombings here.

Regarding the impact of this terrorist act on tourism in Egypt, al-Manawi said that the incident has not affected the in-flow of tourists to Egypt since the outbreak of it till now. Terrorism exists everywhere, he added.

On the weapons used in the attack, al-Manawi said that the secrecy of investigation requires not revealing facts.

At the beginning of the news conference, al-Manawi conveyed to the Greek reporters the condolences of the Egyptian people and security body to the Greek people.

Egypt: Al-Jama'ah al-Islamiyah Claim Responsibility for Tourist Attack

NC2004064796 Paris AFP in English 0635 GMT 20 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Cairo, April 20 (AFP) — Egypt's main armed militant group the al-Jama'ah al-Islamiyah on Saturday [20 April] claimed [responsibility for] a gun attack which killed 18 Greek tourists near the pyramids, but said it had been aimed at Israelis.

In a statement sent to AFP the al-Jama'ah (The Islamic Group) said: "The battalions of the martyr Taliat Yasin Hamman announce their responsibility for Thursday's [18 April] operation in al-Jizah against a group of tourists leaving 18 dead and wounding 15."

The statement added the attack was aimed at "a group of Israeli tourists" who were also staying at the Europa hotel where the attack took place.

"All Jewish interests on Egyptian territory are targetted until the end of the Zionist enemy's operation against Lebanese territory," the statement added.

Four gunmen on Thursday opened fire on the Greek tourists as they were getting into a bus outside the hotel on the main road leading to the pyramids.

The al-Jama'ah has waged a four-year armed campaign aimed at toppling the Egyptian government in which almost 1,000 people have died.

Egypt: Islamic Militants Warn of 'Further Attacks' on Tourists

NC2004100696 Paris AFP in English 0923 GMT 20 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Cairo, April 20 (AFP)— Egypt's main armed Moslem militant group, the al-Jama'ah al-Islamiyah, said Saturday [20 April] it was trying to kill Israelis when it slaughtered 18 Greek tourists near the pyramids and defiantly warned holidaymakers to stay away.

The statement said the attack was aimed at "a group of Jewish tourists" also staying at the Europa hotel in al-Jizah.

"All Jewish interests on Egyptian territory are targetted until the end of the Zionist enemy's operation against Lebanese territory," it added.

Four gunmen opened fire Thursday on the party of Greek tourists as they were getting onto a bus outside the hotel on the main road leading to the pyramids.

Eighteen tourists, mainly elderly women, were killed in the attack which also left 14 Greek tourists wounded as well as an Egyptian.

The statement said the attack was carried out by its armed wing "Thursday [18 April] in al-Jizah against a group of tourists leaving 18 dead and wounding 15" and warned there would be further attacks in the coming days.

But it said it had been "surprised" to learn that it had targetted Greeks who had "replaced the Jewish group as part of the Egyptian security measures to safeguard the lives of Jews."

It renewed its "warning to tourists not to come to Egypt to save their lives and not to be deceived by the claims of the information services of the secular government that security reigns" in the country.

It also called on the Lebanese-based Hizballah and Palestinian fundamentalist group HAMAS [Islamic Resistance Movement] to step-up their attacks on Israeli interests "until the Al-Aqsa mosque is liberated." The mosque in Israel-annexed east Jerusalem is the third holiest site in Islam.

The government of President Husni Mubarak has insisted in recent months that it has quelled the threat to tourists posed by Islamic extremists.

The al-Jama'ah has waged a four-year armed campaign aimed at toppling the Egyptian government, in which almost 1,000 people have died.

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Meanwhile, the daily AL-AHRAM reported Saturday that a al-Jama'ah leader had been arrested for the attack and more than 1,500 had been detained in police inquiries.

Egypt: Further on Islamic Group's Statement, Arrests

JN2004163296 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1513 GMT 20 Apr 96

[Report by Muna Salim in Cairo]

[FBIS Translated Text] The al-Jama'ah al-Islamiyah organization claimed responsibility for the attack in which 18 Greek tourists were killed the day before yesterday [18 April].

In a statement received by western news agencies in Cairo, al-Jama'ah admitted that the group which carried out the operation was actually targeting an Israeli tourist group to avenge the blood of the martyrs falling on Lebanese territory.

Al-Jama'ah said that the hotel where the attack on the Greek tourists took place is one of the main hotels frequented by Israeli tourist groups. It asserted that the Israeli group was scheduled to leave the hotel at the same time as the Greek tourists but their departure time was changed at the last moment.

Al-Jama'ah threatened to strike at all Israeli interests on Egyptian territory until the unjust attack launched by the Zionist enemy's aircraft on fraternal Lebanon stops, as the statement put it. It also called on all Islamic movements, led by Hizballah, Hamas [the Islamic Resistance Movement], the Islamic Jihad in Palestine, and the Jihad group in Egypt, to intensify operations against Israelis until the al-Aqsa Mosque is liberated.

In another development, the Egyptian security organs arrested approximately 1,500 persons suspected of having connections with the al-Jama'ah al-Islamiyah, particularly in the slums on the outskirts of Cairo and in southern Egypt.

The newspaper AL-AHRAM said that a leading member in the military wing of al-Jama'ah al-Islamiyah was arrested, and that he was possibly a member of the group that attacked the Greek tourists.

Egypt: Islamic Group Threatens To Kidnap Americans

NC2104100596 Paris AFP in English 0933 GMT 21 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Cairo, April 21 (AFP) — Egypt's main Moslem militant group the al-Jama'ah al-Islamiyah is considering kidnapping Americans to win the freedom of its jailed spiritual leader Shaykh 'Umar 'Abd-al-Rahman, an al-Jama'ah leader said in a newspaper interview on Sunday [21 April].

"The kidnap of Americans to exchange them for the shaykh is under consideration," Mustafa Hamzah told the Arab daily AL-HAYAH from exile in Afghanistan. "We have already warned the United States via our communiques. The issue depends on our capabilities and the right circumstances for getting what we want," Hamzah added.

'Abd-al-Rahman was jailed for life in the United States in January for his role in plotting a vast terrorist campaign against U.S. targets and Egyptian President Husni Mubarak. The blind cleric is the spiritual leader of all Egypt's Islamic fundamentalists.

The al-Jama'ah al-Islamiyah (Islamic Group) on Thursday escalated its violent campaign against Mubarak's government by gunning down 18 Greek holidaymakers near the pyramids, mistaking them for Israelis, and warning all foreign tourists to get out of Egypt.

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Kuwait

Kuwait: Council of Ministers Expresses Solidarity With Lebanon

LD2104180896 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 1630 GMT 21 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Kuwait, 21 Apr — The state of Kuwait today here reaffirmed its solidarity with Lebanon, in light of to the Israeli aggression against innocent civilians, and its strong condemnation of this aggression.

This came after the weekly meeting of the Council of Ministers held under the chairmanship of the Heir Apparent and Prime Minister Shaykh Sa'd al-'Abdallah al-Salim al-Sabah. 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Dakhil, the minister of state for cabinet affairs and acting planning minister, said in a press statement after the meeting that the Council had followed with deep concern and indignation the regrettable development of events and the painful and tragic situation in fraternal Lebanon, as a result of the continuing Israeli aggressions. [passage omitted]

The Council of Ministers, added Dakhil, stressed the unified Arab position adopted at the Arab League's meeting, which expressed solidarity with Lebanon, and urged the Security Council to ensure the implementation of Resolution 425 which would lead to an Israeli withdrawal from the territory of Lebanon and guarantee the establishing of peace and stability in the region.

Kuwait: Airport To Close 22 Apr in Solidarity With Lebanon

LD2104152296 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 1437 GMT 21 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Kuwait, 21 Apr (KUNA) — The General Administration of Civil Aviation today decided to close Kuwait international airport for five minutes tomorrow in solidarity with Lebanon as a result of the Israeli aggression that it is undergoing.

KUNA has received a statement on this issue issued by the administration, saying that the closure will take place tomorrow for five minutes, from 1200 local time. It said that the closure comes as "an expression of solidarity by the State of Kuwait with Lebanon and with its brotherly people in the destruction, killings, and displacements they are experiencing."

Kuwait: Visiting Belgian Official Urges End to Israeli Attacks

LD2104155796 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 1019 GMT 21 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Kuwait, 21 Apr (KUNA) — Raymond Langendries, speaker of the Belgian parliament [title as received], said here today that the continued Israeli attacks on Lebanon "should stop as soon as possible."

Langendries, who is visiting the country at the invitation of the National Assembly, said in a statement to KUNA that "the Israeli shelling of the innocent and the civilians are illogical acts and our international position toward them is represented by the necessity to stop them immediately."

As for the talks which the Belgian delegation would hold during its two-day visit, he said it would discuss the means for developing the relations between the two countries in different spheres, including the future of aviation between the two countries. [passage omitted]

The delegation will hold a news conference at the Kuwaiti journalists association before its departure tomorrow.

Kuwait: State 'Categorically Denies' Iraqi Espionage Accusations

LD1904191996 Kuwait KSC Television in Arabic 1800 GMT 19 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] An official source has made the following statement: The State of Kuwait categorically denies the false accusations which the Iraqi regime has been repeating following the arrest of two Iraqi nationals by the Iraqi authorities. The Iraqi authorities claimed that these two individuals were spying for the State of Kuwait.

The official source said: These allegations are pure lies and are yet another act in the play which the Iraqi regime had already started in previous statements in which it claimed that it had arrested, at the end of last month, a group of people acting on behalf of the state of Kuwait.

The official source added: The aim of the Iraqi regime behind these claims is to deflect attention away from its inhuman practices toward its people. This is a desperate attempt to distract public opinion with side issues in another bid to implicate Kuwait in its internal problems when the Iraqi regime knows full well Kuwait's policy which rejects any interference in the internal affairs of other states.

This is also a flagrant attempt by the Iraqi regime to create a crisis to justify its failure to implement the resolutions adopted by the United Nations, particularly those pertaining to the sale of quantities of oil to purchase products to meet the needs of the Iraqi people on humanitarian grounds in accordance with Security Council Resolution 986.

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The official source added: These claims coincide with the report submitted to the Security Council by the chairman of the UN Special Commission in charge of removing Iraq's weapons of mass destruction, Rolf Ekeus, who pointed to the existence of serious gaps and omissions in the information provided by the Iraqi regime on chemical and biological weapons, the banned ballistic missiles, and the capabilities relevant to these weapons. These claims also coincide with the statements made by Rolf Ekeus on the banned materials which Iraq continues to import and the secret assets it uses to finance the purchase of these materials.

The source concluded the statement by saying: These allegations which the Iraqi regime is repeating will not fool anybody especially since the countries of the world are fully aware of the operations of repression, oppression, and starvation which this regime carries out against the Iraqi people for whom this regime has no consideration. The Iraqi regime, through its rejection of the relevant UN resolutions and its refusal to implement them, is also responsible for the suffering which the Iraqi people continues to endure.

Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia: Lebanese Diplomat Praises Saudi Support, Aid

LD1904140296 Riyadh SPA in English 1246 GMT 19 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Jeddah, April 19, SPA — The Lebanese general consul in Jeddah Mohammad al-Harakah has praised the Saudi support for Lebanon represented in King Fahd's order to send urgent relief aid including food, medicine, blankets, rugs, tents and ambulances to Lebanon.

He said Saudi Arabia was always at the forefront of countries which supported Lebanon, and stressed that the Lebanese people and government still remember the positions of the Saudi monarch and people in support of peace and stability in all Lebanese territories.

In a statement to the Jeddah-based Arabic-language daily AL-MADINAH, he said Israelis were disturbed by the fact that Lebanon is starting to assume a positive and effective role in the region.

He pointed out that the Saudi-based International Islamic Relief Organization (IIRO) has extended dlrs 200,000 in assistance to Lebanon where Israeli attacks have driven tens of thousands of people from their homes and destroyed a great deal of infrastructure projects.

Furthermore, a number of Lebanese officials have expressed deep thanks and appreciation to the custodian of the two holy mosques for the emergency relief aid sent by the kingdom to Lebanon aboard Saudi cargo planes.

Lebanese Health Minister Marwan Hamada thanked King Fahd on behalf of the Lebanese Government and people for standing by Lebanon in this critical time of crisis caused by Israeli aggression.

He praised the monarch's care for Lebanon and the Lebanese people at all times and pointed to Saudi political, economic and social assistance to his country as well.

Minister of expatriate affairs and member of the Higher Commission for Relief Aid in Lebanon Ali al-Khalil also expressed thanks to King Fahd for the Saudi assistance which will help alleviate the suffering of the Lebanese people who have been driven from their homes by the vicious Israeli attacks.

Secretary general of the commission, Major General Yahia Raad, also praised King Fahd's initiative to send humanitarian aid to Lebanon and stressed that the Lebanese Government and people appreciate the Saudi support for their country on all levels.

Saudi Arabia: Iranian Ayatollah Calls For Rally Against Israel in Mecca

LD2104200596 Tehran IRNA in English 1921 GMT 21 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Mecca, Saudi Arabia, April 21, IRNA — A leading ayatollah of Iran, now here with Iranian pilgrims, said today that Muslims were responsible to "expose the beastly nature of the Zionist regime" in their assembly for anathematizing unbelieving world governments here later on.

Head of the Guardians' Council of Iran Ayatollah Jannati said that scattered efforts to the same end and purpose by pilgriming Muslims would not bring in its intended results, but that their outcries of condemnation of the Zionist regime in their forthcoming rally in Mecca could help world people become aware of the gravity of the criminal perpetrations of the Zionists.

He said once the "wretched purpose of America and the Zionist regime have become universal knowledge the world would automatically hate the enemies of Muslims.

In related development, leader of mass prayers, 'Abd-al-Aziz Bin-Baz, at the prophet's mosque in the holy city of Medina said Friday [19 April] that the annual demonstations by Muslims in Mecca for anathematizing unbelieving international arrogance could not be sanctioned in Islam, though Sunnite leaders of congregational prayers now on pilgrimage in Mecca in a separate

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communique hastened to say that the rally by Muslims for disowning unbelievers was a fundamental ideological component of the Islamic faith.

In their communique that came as a bitter reaction to the statements by Saudi Arabian royal court preacher, Shaykh 'Abd-al-'Aziz Bin-Baz of the prophet's mosque, Sunni members of Muslim theologians aduced evidence in historical Muslim traditions saying the symbolic diavowal of unbelievers should never be omitted from the annual Muslim ceremonies in Mecca.

Meanwhile, the Islamic Tablighat [propaganda] Organization of Iran published a similar communique in Tehran Sunday calling on Iran's Muslim people to participate in national rallies simultaneous with those to be staged in Mecca for anathematizing unbelieving world arrogance, on top of the list the American Government and the Zionist entity, as well as condemn Zionists' massacre of innocent and defenseless civilians in southern Lebanon in the 11th day of the operation code named Grapes of Wrath.

Saudi Arabia: Minister Warns Against Marches by Iranians at Hajj

LD2104052396 Riyadh SPA in Arabic
2255 GMT 20 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Mina, 20 Apr — Prince Nayif Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, interior minister and chairman of the Higher Committee for Hajj, stressed that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's decision not to allow the entry of pilgrims coming from the African belt [as received] due to the outbreak of meningitis in many of these countries embodied the responsibility of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and its ministry of health. His highness said: "The safety of the pilgrims is of the utmost importance to us and the decision we made was the rightful one and should be appreciated by all. Despite this measure, the Ministry of Health is carrying out a vast vaccination campaign."

This was announced at a news conference held by his highness at the headquarters of public security in Mina at the end of an inspection visit today in Mecca. [passage omitted] His highness reaffirmed that no marches or rallies would be staged by Iranian pilgrims during this pilgrimage, just as no marches or rallies were staged in recent years. In reply to a question on statements made by the Iranian authorities on this subject, he said: "What is said inside any state is a matter concerning this state, and they [Iranian authorities] have the right to say whatever they like." His Highness Prince Nayif Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz added: "In a previous statement by an official at the Interior Ministry, it was said that nothing like this [marches and rallies] happened, and it would never happen."

His highness insisted that the Iranian officials and the whole world clearly knew this, including the Iranian people.

His highness expressed the hope that the Iranians would not try to do something like this [marches and rallies]. [passage omitted]

Replying to a question on the passage of the car loaded with explosives through brotherly countries, his highness said: "I cannot answer something which concerns someone else."

Replying to a question on the reservation of his highness vis-a-vis the word terrorism made during the recent meeting of Arab interior ministers in Tunis, he indicated that his reservation was not on the word but on the definition of terrorism.

He said: "An Arab working-team from Interior Ministries of 16 Arab countries, including Saudi Arabia, will soon meet in Egypt and, with God's will, they will set up for us a complementary project or a strategy that might be adopted by interior ministers and by all Arab states." [passage omitted]

Saudi Arabia: Further on Minister's Warning To Iranian Pilgrims

LD2104161696 Riyadh SPA in English
1244 GMT 21 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Mina, April 21, SPA — Prince Nayif Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, the minister of interior, said the decision of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to prevent arrival of pilgrims from Meningitis-affected African countries embodizes the responsibility it has been shouldering towards the guests of God.

The Kingdom is keen on ensuring the safety of the pilgrims, Prince Nayif told a press conference here yesterday.

Prince Nayif reiterated that the Kingdom would never tolerate staging of processions and demonstrations at the holy places during the pilgrimage season.

The Iranian officials as well as the entire world are fully aware of this fact, he said and added 'I believe that the Iranians will not try to stage demonstrations and processions'.

He made it clear that the Kingdom will never tolerate any attempt to undermine the security of the pilgrims and will face any such attempt firmly and determinedly.

Recalling the success of the security and customs officials in aborting an attempt to smuggle explosions into

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the Kingdom three weeks ago, Prince Nayif highlighted the vigilance of the security and the customs officials and said they had performed their duty efficiently.

Prince Nayif said investigations were underway in this regard and said 'what published and announced in this regard was enough and no need for further elaboration for the time being.'

It would be better to leave this matter until the investigations are over, he said.

Prince Nayif underscored the importance of adherence to the Kingdom's regulations by the residents and said the violators of the regulations will be checked.

Prince Nayif called for the development of the information media and said such a matter is a common responsibility that should be undertaken by the Ministry of Information and all officials, writers and journalists.

Prince Nayif expected that the pilgrims will easily and smoothly move this year from 'Arafat to Muzdalifa and said coordiantion is existing in this regard between the Ministry of Interior and the other concerned organs.

Asked about the reservation spelled by his highness at the recent conference of the Arab interior ministers, held in Tunisia about terrorism, Prince Nayif said 'my reservation was not about the word terrorism but it was about the definition of terrorism.'

He noted that a working Arab team including representatives of the Interior Ministries from 16 Arab countries will soon hold meetings in Egypt to set up an integrated strategy in this connection.

He reiterated that Islam has nothing to do with terrorism Islam does not tolerate unjustified killing not only of human beings but even of animals, he said and added 'terrorism is an unacceptable phenomenon'.

Prince Nayif reiterated the determination of the Kingdom to firmly confront the phenomenon of cultural invasion.

Prince Nayif called the officials in charge of border security either civilians or military men to become more vigilant and said the Kingdom is an indivisible part of the world. Even the most developed countries face problems at their borders, he said.

Asked about the Libyan plane which had earlier arrived in the Kingdom carrying Libyan pilgrims, Prince Nayif said 'the Libyan plane was received and the plane returned back after being refueled and the disembarkation of its passengers.'

What will happen in the future in this regard will be the responsiblity of other authorites, he said.

Prince Nayif urged the citizens to cooperate with the concerned officials for the containment of the phenomenon of the foreigners who over stay in the Kingdom after performing pilgrimage or Umrah (minor pilgrimage).

Saudi Arabia: Tanks Deployed Outside Iranian Mission in Mecca

LD2204103096 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 0930 GMT 22 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] With the deployment of several tanks and armored personnel carriers in front of the representative mission of the eminent leader [Khamene'i] in holy Mecca, [Saudi] Arabian security around the mission has been intensified. The deployment of security and military forces around the Iranian mission followed remarks by two Saudi Arabian officials, declaring the holding of any kind of political ceremony or gathering during the Hajj to be banned and illegal.

The security measures taken by Arabia in holy Mecca have been increased at a time when the eminent leader's mission is continuing its normal activity as in previous days and today, too, a seminar on the Ahl al-Bayt [Household of the Prophet] has opened at the mission, with the participation of 250 religious personalities from various Islamic countries.

Saudi Arabia: Interior Minister Announces Arrest of Riyadh Bomb Suspects

LD2204103496 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 0926 GMT 22 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Riyadh, 22 Apr — Interior Minister His Royal Highness Prince Nayif Bin-'Abd-al-Aziz announced today that with God's help, those responsible for the bombing in Riyadh, in the al-'Aliyah area on Monday 20/6/1416 AH, corresponding to November 27 1995, have been arrested.

This came in a statement by His Highness Prince Nayif Bin-'Abd-al-Aziz to the television of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia at 1100 this morning. It was followed by the broadcast of the voices and pictures of the people arrested claiming responsibility [for the bombing].

The statement of the interior minister will follow.

United Arab Emirates

UAE: Envoy Regrets Security Council's Rejection of Arab Move

JN1904194496 Manama WAKH in English 1515 GMT 19 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] New York, April 19 (GNA)— Arab countries today expressed regret and outrage at the

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Security Council's rejection of an Arab draft decision aimed at ending Israeli aggression on Lebanon.

United Arab Emirates Permanent Representative in the United Nations and current chairman of the Arab group Muhammad Jasim Samhan said the Arab decision was drafted on the basis of the international charter and law.

Addressing the Security Council after its rejection of the Arab decision and adopting a milder French draft decision, Samhan said "the Arab draft decision was a message to Israel to stop its aggression against Lebanon and make a complete withdrawal from the Lebanese territory."

He expressed gratitude to the four countries that supported the Arab decision which included Egypt, China, Indonesia and Guinea Bissau, while calling the international community to extend assistance to the Lebanese people.

The EMIRATES NEWS AGENCY (WAM) said that the Arab group were about to request for an extraordinary meeting for the General Assembly to mobilize support for the Arab decision.

Yemen

Yemen: Al-Iryani, U.S. Envoy Discuss Lebanon, Island Dispute

JN2004174596 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 20 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Brother Dr. 'Abd-al-Karim al-Iryani, deputy prime minister and foreign minister, received His Excellency U.S. Ambassador in Sanaa David Newton this morning. They discussed relations between the two friendly countries and developments in Lebanon.

Al-Iryani stressed our country's principled position which supports the fraternal Lebanese people against the unjust Israeli aggression. He also stressed our country's support for the initiatives aimed to achieve an immediate cease-fire in fraternal Lebanon.

They also discussed the Yemeni-Eritrean dispute over the Yemeni island of al-Hanish al-Kabir. The ambassador reiterated the U.S. position on this dispute, represented by the U.S. Government's continued strong support for the French initiative designed to achieve a peaceful and lasting solution to this dispute.

He emphasized that military escalation and the use of force will not serve any side. The United States also urges both sides to take immediate steps in order to render successful the French initiative, he added.

The U.S. ambassador voiced the U.S. Administration's satisfaction with the Yemeni Government's acceptance of the French initiative. This confirms the Yemeni Government's commitment to a peaceful solution, he said.

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Iraq: 'Working Session' With UN Delegation Held 19 Apr

JN1904192396 Baghdad Iraq Television Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 19 Apr 96

[Announcer-read report]

[FBIS Translated Text] Iraqi and UN delegates held another working session this evening, Baghdad time, as part of the dialogue on oil for food, medicine, and other necessities for the Iraqi people. The dialogue sessions began on 8 April. The Iraqi delegation is led by Dr. 'Abd-al-Amir al-Anbari while the UN delegation is led by Hans Corell, legal adviser to the UN secretary general.

The dialogue sessions focused on reviewing what has been achieved in this context. It was announced at the United Nations that the working sessions will continue as part of the third round of the dialogue. It was decided that the two delegations will hold another working session next Monday [22 April] in the evening, Baghdad time, because of the weekend holiday in the United Nations.

Iraq: Rolf Ekeus Says 'Working Program' Reached

JN1904182996 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1640 GMT 19 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 19 Apr (INA) — Rolf Ekeus, chairman of the UN Special Commission, left Baghdad today at the conclusion of a two-day visit to Iraq.

Prior to his departure, Ekeus held a news conference at the al-Rashid Hotel attended by Arab, foreign, and INA correspondents. Ekeus said he agreed with the Iraqi side on a working program that would expedite resolving all outstanding issues between the two sides to implement Paragraph 22 of Security Council Resolution 687.

Commenting on the recent developments, Ekeus noted the constructive and positive cooperation with the Iraqi authorities. He underlined the positive developments that took place, saying these developments removed many obstacles that faced the Special Committee teams.

Ekeus arrived in Baghdad yesterday and met with Deputy Prime Minister Tariq 'Aziz, Foreign Minister Muhammad Sa'id al-Sahhaf, Oil Minister 'Amir Muhammad Rashid, and a number of specialists to brief them on the report he submitted to the Security Council last week.

Iraq: Oil Minister Restates 'Eagerness' To Cooperate With UN

JN1904204196 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 19 Apr 96 p 18

[Report by Mustafa Kamil in Baghdad]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Iraq reiterated that it has fully complied with all international resolutions on disarming it of strategic weapons.

Iraqi Oil Minister Lieutenant General 'Amir Muhammad Rashid, who is heading the Iraqi side to the talks with the UN Special Commission entrusted with dismantling Iraq's strategic weapons, said: Iraq understands the views of the Special Commission and will try to comply with its demands so that the states which exercise pressure on the Special Commission will not find new pretexts to maintain the embargo imposed on Iraq.

In an exclusive statement to AL-RA'Y correspondent in Baghdad, the Iraqi oil minister said that the Iraqi side will review with UN Special Commission Chairman Rolf Ekeus his semi-annual report forwarded to the Security Council on 11 April. Rashid asserted Iraq's eagerness to fully cooperate with the Special Commission to clarify all that needs further clarification so that eventually, Ambassador Ekeus will submit a report that recognizes Iraq's full cooperation with the Security Council.

The Iraqi oil minister said: In the past, Iraq used to review the semi-annual report with the head of the UN Special Commission before he actually submits it to the Security Council in order to make certain remarks and answer the questions of the Special Commission. However, he added, this was not the case this time for technical reasons. The minister declined to give further details. [passage omitted]

Iraq: Saddam Said Considering Government Changes, Reconciliation

MM1904140396 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 19 Apr 96 p 2

[Report by 'Imad al-Furayh: "New Changes Expected in Iraqi Government" — quotation marks as published]

[FBIS Translated Text] Amman — Informed Iraqi sources in Amman expect President Saddam Husayn to make nonessential changes in his government and in the structure of the Armed Forces and the organs of the ruling Ba'th Party.

The sources said that these changes will not affect the main ministries and organs run by members of his family or those close to him, since the Defense, Interior,

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Foreign, Industry, and Oil Ministries, in addition to the presidential court, intelligence and investigation organs, and the Public Security Directorate, will be excluded. The sources expect the changes to include the Education, Higher Education, and Agriculture Ministries, and maybe the Finance Ministry. However, it does not mean that President Saddam Husayn will not consider removing the defense minister, who was initially appointed for a transitional period after the dismissal of former Defense Minister 'Ali Hasan al-Majid, the Iraqi president's cousin, following a problem between him and 'Udayy Saddam Husayn, the Iraqi president's eldest son, who is currently overseeing the Defense Ministry's work and activities.

The informed Iraqi sources base their expectations on President Saddam Husayn's recent tour of the cities and districts of Mosul, al-Dur, Hadithah, al-Najaf, and Karbala' in north, west, and central Iraq. They are Sunni and Shiite cities with which the Iraqi leadership had clashed following a series of dismissals, executions, and arrests that included officers, party officials, and senior employees belonging to these governorates and cities.

The sources stress that the Iraqi president's tour of Iraqi cities, which started last month, is aimed first at reconciliation with the people of these cities and at securing the loyalty of their tribes. It is an undeclared apology from President Saddam Husayn to the people of these cities and their tribes for actions from which the Iraqi president dissociated himself. He held government and party organs responsible for these actions.

President Saddam Husayn's open call to include the people of the provinces in the exercise of power — in a speech he delivered in the Ninawa Governorate building in Mosul, which he visited last week — is a clear indication of an attempt to create a state of balance among the people of the provinces and between the Sunnah and the Shi'ah in order to include them in posts that are ostensibly leading posts but which are marginal in the Iraqi president's view. Especially as the central leadership in Iraq is under President Saddam Husayn's control.

The sources say that President Saddam Husayn's address to the people of Mosul is aimed at reconciliation with them inasmuch as he executed 13 airmen from among their sons on charges of conspiring against the regime. He also dismissed a number of senior officials, among them former Education Minister Hikmat al-Bazzaz, in addition to a number of officers from the governorate, whose sons represented a major proportion of the Iraqi Army.

On that basis, the Iraqi sources expect some of the sons of Mosul, al-Dur, Hadithah, and Rawah in west Iraq to be included in leading, military, and party posts, since the people of these cities have been kept out of leadership positions, whereas they were a traditional ally of the Iraqi president for 25 years. This is in addition to the inclusion of some Iraqi Shiites from al-Najaf and Karbala' in these posts, since the Iraqi president has begun to pay attention to the people of the south through his concern for the Sunni al-Sa'dun tribe in al-Nasiriyah Governorate in southern Iraq.

According to an Iraqi politician in Amman, President Saddam Husayn's endeavors to achieve reconciliation with these tribes come after traditional partners such as the al-Jubur, al-Dulaym, and al-Takaritah tribes abandoned him following the elimination of Husayn Kamil and his family in February. And this reconciliation "is purely for propaganda purposes and hase no effect on Iraqi policy, just exactly as the Iraqi leadership used the so-called people's referendum, the National Assembly elections, and the local councils elections for local consumption to give the impression that the Iraqi leadership is pursuing a democratic policy."

Iraq: National Command Condemns 'Zionist Aggression' in Lebanon

JN2004160596 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1445 GMT 20 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 20 Apr (INA)—The National Command of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party asserted that Zionism and its usurpist entity on the land of Arab Palestine proved once again that it is a racist, Fascist, and expansionist movement, which is not content with what it has achieved at the expense of Palestine, Lebanon, Syria, and the Arab nation, but is also trying to implement more criminal plans and realize more expansionist goals.

In a statement issued today, the National Command said that the renewed aggression in Lebanon is a link in a chain of schemes targeted against our Arab nation. The most comprehensive and fiercest scheme, it said, was the imperialist-Zionist-Atlantic 30-state aggression that was carried out against Iraq to extinguish the lighthouse of our nation so that darkness can prevail and the said aggressors can take a total official control of the Arab homeland.

The National Command pointed out that the Zionist aggression on Lebanon was carried out as if the Zionist entity had been sure that the international and capitulatory Arab situation would not constitute any deterrence or cause it any embarrassment. This entity has been recognized by many Arab regimes, doors were opened for it in this or that country, normalization with it was widely welcomed by surrounding regimes without any

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shame, and facilities and bases were offered by some Arab regimes to the United States, the Zionist entity's partner in its crimes, so that it can launch its aggression on Iraq from these bases and to protect the Zionist entity.

The National Command pointed out in its statement that the U.S. support was very clear from the beginning of the brutal aggression on Lebanon. U.S. officials said that it was useless for Lebanon to lodge a complaint to the Security Council because the U.S. veto was ready to block any attempt to condemn the Zionist entity. Can there be any greater disregard than this of the international community and the Security Council by all human criteria.

The statement added: Thus, the UN Security Council, under U.S. pressure and instigation, holds the aggressor and the victim to be on the same level and issues a terse statement on the unjust aggression against Lebanon, condemning the aggression but failing to ask the Zionist enemy to stop this aggression, and ignoring its own Resolution 425 which calls on the Zionists to withdraw unconditionally from all the Lebanese areas all the way to the international borders with occupied Palestine. Thus, it appears that the Security Council is retreating from the its 1978 resolution.

In its statement, the National Command recalled the position of steadfast Iraq which proudly symbolized the immortal mission and principles of the Arab nation. It said that Iraq confronted the aggressors with the support of the Arab nation and the masses, who were aware of the nature of the battle which Iraq waged against its enemies. In his historic 12 August 1990 initiative, Leader President Saddam Husayn combined all the causes of the Arab nation from Iraq to Lebanon and Palestine and linked them to the causes of unity and liberation. The savage aggression against Lebanon is one of the chapters of the continuous aggression against the Arab nation and an extension of the aggression against Iraq with the same aims but with different means and methods.

The National Command said that the Lebanese tragedy and the aggression against Lebanon is an aggression against all Arab countries, which are being subjected to attacks, treachery, killing, destruction, and humiliation as a result of the vacuum created by the weak Arab rulers themselves.

The National Command added: The first lesson that must be learned from this aggression is that the Arabs must reflect on themselves and rally round in order to review their conditions and look for the real malaise that causes their weakness and the dangers that are besetting them.

Concluding its statement, the National Command of the Ba'th Party appealed to the Arabs to stop fighting among themselves and to stop indulging in calling for divisions, discrimination, and trusteeship. This is the main lesson that they must learn. They must gather together to launch an act of salvation to restore their lost equilibrium and dignity which some of them caused to vanish. They should rise from their slumbers. They must learn that what they were chasing was a mirage that weakened them and caused them humiliation. They must know that people with the minimum foresightedness have realized the deception and futility of peace and the peace process.

Iraq: U.S., IAEA Accused of Ignoring Reports on Israeli Reactor

JN2104123496 Baghdad INA in English 1020 GMT 21 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Baghdad, April 21, INA — An Iraqi paper described the nuclear leakage from the Zionist atomic reactor (Dimona) as dangerous and forms an environmental disaster which threatens the human beings and creatures in the region.

In an article issued here, AL-JUMHURIYAH daily said this leakage does not happen now only. It added that Jordan and Palestine had reconnoitered the nuclear leakage from this reactor during the last five years but there was always a deliberate blackout on this subject.

It went on to say that apart from what happened to Chernobyl reactor which received an international concentration for a long time, the U.S. did not air any statement on this subject and the International Atomic Energy Agency [IAEA] looks as if it is not concerned about it since it has not sent expert team to investigate the question as it used to do. In addition to that, the Western media has ignored this dangerous accident as if it is invaluable.

It pointed out the U.S. carelessness towards this subject contradicts blatantly with its well-known international nuclear policy which called for the complete control of the nuclear weapons and institutions and the prohibition of proliferation of them.

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Israel: 'Temporary' Cease-Fire Accord Reached for Christopher Visit

TA1904174896 Jerusalem Channel 2 Television Network in Hebrew 1732 GMT 19 Apr 96

[Report by political correspondent 'Imanu'el Rosen from the Tel Aviv studio—live]

[FBIS Translated Text] One can now clearly state that an agreement has been reached on a temporary cease-fire. This is still not being announced by the sides because they want to be sure. There have been some bad experiences with the relevant parties. There will be no announcement until everyone is completely certain; however, I have learned that a short while ago, a U.S. State Department spokesman said in The Hague that such an agreement has indeed been reached. This report has also been confirmed to me by senior Israeli sources. There is an agreement on a temporary cease- fire which will be in force during Secretary of State Christopher's shuttle mission, which will probably last several days.

Israel: Peres on Possible Cease-Fire in Lebanon

TA1904190396 Jerusalem Channel 2 Television Network in Hebrew 1700 GMT 19 Apr 96

[Interview with Israeli Prime Minister Shim'on Peres by political correspondents 'Imanu'el Rosen and Gadi Sukenik at the Prime Minister's Office in Jerusalem on 19 April — recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Rosen] Mr. Prime Minister, is it possible to achieve an immediate cease-fire, as requested by the U.S. President, within the next 24 or 48 hours?

[Peres] Possibly. There is no certainty of this, but the possibility exists.

[Sukenik] Was there any international pressure on you from the Americans or other elements? Was there any kind of new pressure which was not exerted previously?

[Peres] The pressure is what is published and what people see — public opinion. Everyone is worried about this; however, yesterday the U.S. President proposed an immediate cease-fire. I replied that we were ready to agree if the other parties accepted a cease-fire.

[Rosen] Have any replies been received from the Syrians on whether they are indeed prepared to accept such a cease-fire?

[Peres] Not yet, but there have been indications to this effect.

[Rosen] What is happening right now on the political front? How are the contacts being held, and what is Israel doing to promote the chances of achieving a cease-fire?

[Peres] The United States is organizing these efforts. It is the one with the real power. There is also a French envoy, EU Chairman Agnelli was just here, and Primakov is due here on Monday [22 April]. However, the United States is the only party that can really handle things, and Dennis Ross is due to arrive within several hours. Also, I assume that tomorrow morning Secretary of State Christopher will fly to Damascus and then come here. This is the main activity.

[Sukenik] Katyusha rockets continued to land today. You just said that it is still unclear how it is possible to achieve a cease- fire and with whom. In other words, the situation remains totally unclear.

[Peres] Things are clearing up, and I believe that a formal cease-fire will be announced by Lebanon. Practically speaking, however, this depends on Syria. I assume that the Americans are aware of this and will try to attain a formal cease-fire as well as a halt to hostilities in the field.

[Rosen] Mr. Peres, were it not for yesterday's tragedy in Kafr Qana, how long did you plan to continue the operation and how did you hope it would end?

[Peres] Look, the truth is that I believe that Kafr Qana hastened the end of the operation rather than prolonging it. We sought to exercise patience in order to prevent civilian deaths. We wanted a restrained operation which would achieve its goals. We did not want to set new goals that could have prolonged or exacerbated the war. However, what happened yesterday clearly precipitated the operation's conclusion.

[Rosen] Mr. Peres, I know that you did not rush to authorize every target for the IDF [Israel Defense Forces]. The defense minister's bureau was definitely not a rubber stamp. Perhaps greater caution should have been exercised before authorizing an attack on a position in such close proximity to large numbers of civilian refugees?

[Peres] I do not believe that the IDF knew that refugees were concentrated there or else the soldiers would not have shelled the location. I do not want to create the wrong impression. The defense minister is not the only one who cares about sparing lives. The entire military command was convinced of the need to avoid unnecessary killing. There was no blood thirstiness. We all saw eye to eye on this. The tragedy happened because although we knew that Hizballah had attacked us from a location near a UNIFIL [UN Interim Force in Lebanon] base, there is a drill. Everyone knows that if we are fired upon from a UNIFIL position, the UN troops enter an air raid shelter, and there are no problems. This is what they did in this case as well. What we did not

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know was that approximately 500 or 600 villagers who had fled their homes were massed there in unbelievably crowded conditions.

[Rosen] The UNIFIL spokesman asserted today that Israel had been notified about the presence of civilians there.

[Peres] I do not know about that. I know that UNIFIL sources confirmed that Hizballah had fired shells and also launched katyusha rockets at our forces from the UN positions.

[Sukenik] I do not understand even now. The chief of staff said that some IDF shells must have had a long trajectory, or in other words missed their target. Was this a miss, a mistake, or were the shells indeed aimed at that location?

[Peres] It was a miss because the IDF has assessed that the source of the fire directed against us was between 250 and 350 meters away.

[Sukenik] So someone missed with the shells?

[Peres] Two shells apparently strayed beyond their trajectory, but we were not concerned because we knew that in such cases the UN troops immediately enter their shelters and there would be no problem.

[Rosen] Mr. Peres, the cease-fire is only the first stage. Afterwards, we must achieve the written or oral understandings. What is the main thing Israel seeks to achieve in these understandings which it did not get from the understandings reached after Operation Accountability?

[Peres] There are various possibilities. It is possible to achieve only a cease-fire. The second possibility is a cease-fire accompanied by understandings. In such a case, the two major understandings are that no fire will be directed from Lebanon at Israeli civilians, and that vice versa, Israeli forces will not fire at Lebanese civilians. The third alternative is reaching an interim arrangement. We have no territorial ambitions with regard to Lebanon. The fourth option is a permanent arrangement which I would rule out because it depends on Syria. In the present state of relations between Syria and Lebanon, the latter has no license to conduct separate negotiations. As for an interim arrangement, if the Lebanese agree and the Syrians permit this, we are willing to accept this.

[Sukenik] Do you see any possibility of a halt to the firing of katyusha rockets in the near future? In other words, what can you tell or promise Israel's northern residents this evening?

[Peres] I am in no mood to promise anything. We are holding negotiations. We might reach an early cease-fire, but it could also take several days.

[Sukenik] Days, or perhaps weeks?

[Peres] I cannot tell you. We are doing all in our power to shorten this period. I believe that we have a chance, but I cannot make any commitments on behalf of both parties. I can only speak for myself.

[Sukenik] Thank you very much.

Israel: Peres—We Are Ready for 'Immediate Cease-Fire'

LD1904185796 Paris France-2 Television Network in French 1800 GMT 19 Apr 96

[Interview with Israeli Prime Minister Shim'on Peres by Charles Enderlin in Israel on 19 April — recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Announcer] We now have an exclusive interview with Israeli Prime Minister Shim'on Peres made by Charles Enderlin, our permanent correspondent in Israel. He first asked Peres whether he had something to say to the Lebanese today:

[Peres] We are ready for an immediate cease-fire and we have no territorial aims in Lebanon. We wholly accept the international border between Israel and Lebanon. Hizballah's terrorism must be stopped.

[Enderlin] So, you mean that if Hizballah stops its shelling then Israel will stop shelling Lebanon?

[Peres] Yes. Israel did not start the shelling. What we did was in response to what Hizballah did.

[Enderlin] Do you also want guarantees that Galilee will not be shelled anymore?

[Peres] Who can give us such a guarantee? We must reach an agreement and the agreement would be the guarantee.

[Enderlin] Do you think we are heading rapidly towards a cease- fire?

[Peres] There is a good chance. I don't know, maybe in one or two days. Maybe three days.

[Enderlin] Is this going to have an influence on the peace process?

[Peres] Yes, because Iran and the fundamentalists are trying to stop the peace process. It is a joint effort that involves Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement], the [Islamic] Jihad, and Hizballah. They want to kill the peace process and they want to topple the government which is working for peace. That's it.

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Israel: Peres on Goals of Lebanon Operation, Possible Cease-Fire

TA1904124696 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1120 GMT 19 Apr 96

[Report by correspondent Pe'erli Shahar from Tel Aviv University — live]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Shahar] Prime Minister Shim'on Peres is now speaking at Tel Aviv University. Peres began his remarks with a learned lecture on the latest developments in the Middle East, focusing particularly on Iran, Libya, and Iraq. Peres said that Iran was cultivating and assisting Islamic Jihad and Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] in an attempt to undermine the agreement with the Palestinians. Iran was also sponsoring Hizballah in order to forestall any possibility of an agreement with Lebanon. When the prime minister was asked how he intended to resolve the conflict in Lebanon, this was his reply:

[Peres] There are three ways to resolve the distressing situation in the north: One option, which is very limited, is to agree on a mutual cease-fire. The United States has entered the picture. As you know, the U.S. President yesterday called on the parties to agree to a cease-fire. Israel said that if a cease-fire was declared by the other parties, Israel would also accept this. I believe that this is ultimately in the interest of all the parties. It could take a few days, but this is one way to resolve the plight. The second alternative is to reach an interim arrangement with Lebanon. We will also agree to this. In other words, if Lebanon has some degree of independence, and if Prime Minister al-Hariri is prepared to meet with us, then we are willing to meet with him. The outline for such an interim arrangement is quite clear. Israel has already declared that it recognizes the international border with Lebanon. We have no territorial or other aspirations with regard to Lebanon. We are prepared to have the Lebanese Army deploy in the southern part of the security zone and impose its control over the irregular militias in Lebanon, including Hizballah.

Afterwards, while guaranteeing the standing of the SLA [South Lebanese Army] and the settlements in south Lebanon, the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] can begin to gradually implement a withdrawal from various parts of Lebanon, on the condition that the Lebanese Army proves it is capable of maintaining security there. The third solution is to reach a full peace agreement, not just an interim arrangement like the one I just mentioned. I do not believe it is possible to reach a full peace agreement with Lebanon separately. This depends on the Syrians. Therefore, negotiations must be held with Syria and Lebanon, and for various reasons, which would take a long time to explain in detail, I do not believe that we are on the verge of this now.

[Shahar] Shim'on Peres was asked to comment on the reports about the threats to the life of captive navigator Ron Arad. The prime minister asserted that further talk would not serve any purpose and only make things more difficult. We are now waiting to see whether Prime Minister Peres is going to hold a news conference.

[Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew at 1153 GMT on 19 April carries a similar report on Peres' remarks at Tel Aviv University. The report notes that "Peres said that Hizballah will interpret any Israeli withdrawal from Lebanon as capitulation to its pressure," and that therefore, this is impossible. In a recorded passage, Peres says: "I ask myself whether we should declare our readiness to withdraw from Lebanon while katyusha rockets are landing? Those who fire the katyusha rockets will then take the credit. Basically, we seek to withdraw. I headed the government that pulled the IDF out of Lebanon, and I have no intention of sending the IDF back into Lebanon. However, I have no doubt that if we declare our intention to withdraw from Lebanon today, Hizballah will boast that this is a result of its pressure."

[As for the goals of Operation Grapes of Wrath, Peres says that "we are limiting our goals. We are not setting broad objectives. We clearly state that our goal is to stop the firing of katyusha rockets in the north and to halt the attacks on IDF soldiers. As soon as we achieve these goals, we will stop the operation." In a recorded passage, Peres says: "We embarked on this operation after being left with no alternative. We were fired upon. We have no intention of occupying territory in Lebanon. We have no desire to remain in Lebanon on a permanent basis. Our aim is to guarantee security for our northern settlement, to put a halt to the attacks against civilians, and to retaliate as necessary whenever our forces in the security zone are attacked. I do not seek additional objectives, because anyone who seeks to obtain additional goals will only bog us down while attempting to achieve difficult goals and get us involved in an unnecessarily long and bloody war."]

Israel: More on Peres Proposals for Understandings With Lebanon

TA2004082696 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0700 GMT 20 Apr 96

[Report by political correspondent Udi Segal]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The recent political effort to settle the Lebanon crisis may result in nothing beyond a cease-fire based on the formula that the firing of katyushas at the Galilee equals continued IDF [Israel

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Defense Forces] raids on Beirut; however, the United States is acting to achieve more than that. It seeks to link the Lebanese crisis to the peace process and insist that al-Asad choose between two options. The first is continued Syrian support for terrorism and the maintenance of its alliance with Iran. In this context, we heard yesterday that Hizballah's katyusha supply in recent days was provided by Ahmad Jibril with Syria's knowledge. The second option is Syrian adherence to the peace process and its being drawn deeper into the arms of the United States, which would eventually help toward its removal from the list of terror- supporting countries. [passage omitted]

Meanwhile, Prime Minister Shim'on Peres has presented several options for an understanding. [passage omitted]

One of Peres' options speaks of redrafting the understandings achieved after Operation Accountability in 1993 and setting down the principles in a written document that complies with the U.S. interpretation — namely, that neither side will fire at civilians and that the IDF will have the right to react to Hizballah fire from Lebanese villages.

The interim arrangement option, which Peres has stressed repeatedly, speaks of declaring Lebanon's international border the future permanent border. Lebanon will pledge, with Syrian consent, to put an end to terrorism, disband Hizballah, and deploy its troops on the northern border of the security zone. The IDF will withdraw by stages to interim lines, after the SLA [South Lebanese Army] is incorporated into the Lebanese Army and the well-being of the Arab residents of the area is guaranteed. This, in fact, is the same proposal presented by the late Yitzhaq Rabin three years ago. Syria is not expected to go this far, however, and Israel will consider it a political achievement if Damascus agrees to allow Lebanon to participate in the peace process in parallel with the talks with Syria. [passage omitted]

[Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew at 0705 GMT on 20 April carries a report by political correspondent Shlomo Raz, adding: "The agreement of understandings is expected to be put in writing, be meticulously formulated, and not be vague and oral like the Operation Accountability understandings. An effort is being made to achieve upgraded understandings. Everyone in the top political and defense echelons in Jerusalem speaks of upgraded understandings."

[Raz adds: "For its part, the United States has offered to establish a permanent supervising mechanism in Washington with the participation of peace talks coordinator Dennis Ross; Itamar Rabinovich, Israel's ambassador to the United States; and Syrian Ambassador to Washington Walid al-Mu'allim. Various political circles believe that such a mechanism can effectively simplify misunderstandings and deal quickly and effectively with various irregularities."]

Israel: Peres Briefs Cabinet; 'Limited Cease-Fire' Seen Most Likely

TA2104091196 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0805 GMT 21 Apr 96

[Report by political correspondent Shlomo Raz]

[FBIS Translated Text] It is highly likely that the inner cabinet will be convened later today. This is the clearest and best sign of an imminent cease-fire. This morning Prime Minister Shim'on Peres briefed the cabinet on the various options faced by Israel. According to the impression gained by the ministers the most likely option is a limited cease-fire, without achieving any goals such as upgrading the Operation Accountability understandings. This cease- fire will be restricted to a limited period and will be followed by attempts to attain better options.

The prime minister briefed the ministers about four options. He said that following this operation there is a possibility of starting the negotiations on implementing interim arrangements. Another option calls for resuming the Wye Plantation talks with Syria. The third option is the limited cease-fire, and as I said earlier, the ministers received the impression that this is the most realistic option. The fourth option is a cease-fire accompanied by new understandings that will be stricter and better formulated.

Peres is slated to meet U.S. Secretary of State Christopher soon. Following the meeting we will know in what directions things are heading. This afternoon we can expect more pressure from the direction of Russian Foreign Minister Yevgeniy Primakov, who will visit Israel today.

[Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew at 0800 GMT on 21 April adds: "In the cabinet session this morning, Mr. Peres briefed the ministers about the various options facing Israel. He said that the decisions will be made after he hears what the U.S. secretary of state has to say. He also said that Operation Grapes of Wrath is a war that could not be avoided."]

[Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew at 0900 GMT on 21 April adds: "Prime Minister Peres informed the ministers that a team headed by a brigadier general is examining the circumstances of the artillery firing at the Lebanese civilians in the UN Interim Force in Lebanon camp in Qana. The findings will be submitted to the

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government. Meretz ministers Sarid and Tzaban said that those responsible for the firing must draw personal conclusions."]

Israel: Further on Cabinet Meeting on Lebanese Operation

TA2104135796 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1200 GMT 21 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] During the cabinet meeting, Prime Minister Peres described as a tall tale reports in Turkey that the Air Force bombed a base of the Kurdish underground in the Lebanese al-Biqa'. Our political correspondent reports that the chief of staff expressed reservations about the formulation of a question by Minister Shulamit Aloni who wanted to know whether the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] was already done with its plan in Lebanon. Minister Aloni added that we have already destroyed Lebanon three times.

The prime minister expressed anger about the use of the word goals with regard to Lebanon, stating that the aim of Operation Grapes of Wrath is to put an end to the firing of katyushas and to establish peace and quiet. Minister Efrayim Sne called for continued strikes against Lebanese infrastructures so as to increase the pressure against the Syrians.

Israel: Beilin—No Political Goals Toward Syria Set in Operation

TA2004093696 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0700 GMT 20 Apr 96

[Telephone interview with Israeli Minister Yosi Beilin by political correspondent Udi Segal and anchor 'Adi Talmor on 20 April; place not given — live or recorded]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted] [Segal] Minister Beilin, al-Asad seems to be sweeping the table at the moment. He has the world's attention, he seems to have recovered his standing in the Arab world, and he managed to stop the Sharm al-Shaykh process through the postponement of the Luxembourg conference. Israel assumed that when the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] shelled Lebanon, al-Asad would run to the Americans and that a military operation in Lebanon would result in a broad political move that would involve Syria, which would eventually benefit Israel. Haven't these assumptions been disproved?

[Beilin] The question is whether they ever existed. Having participated in the decisionmaking process, I can affirm that no one spoke even incidentally of any far-reaching political developments. We said one thing: Having failed to stop the gunfire at the Galilee towns, we must launch a military operation which, we hope, will be brief and result in a cease-fire; if it does not, we will continue to fight until the other side stops.

As for Syria, I do not begrudge al-Asad his possible involvement in a political move. We did not opt for an operation in order to undermine or strengthen al-Asad. Al-Asad is a player in the political game, and I prefer him to play in our arena rather than in Iran's. We must remember that Iran is using its two arms — Hizballah and Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] — to wage a rather intricate struggle directed against the political process and against us. We must do all we can to neutralize Iran. I believe that if we can move al-Asad into the political arena, it will be an important achievement. As for his sweeping the table, this is not a casino. If his joining the political process means that he has swept the table, let him.

[Segal] My question, in this context, refers to the fact that your position differs from that of Foreign Minister Ehud Baraq, for example. The government's failure to set political goals for this operation, which it should have been done perhaps, may have created sharp disagreements among the cabinet ministers regarding the operation's conclusion.

[Beilin] First, I am not aware of disagreements of this nature. I think our positions are identical. Second, setting a political goal would have been a grave mistake, because we would have become captives of that goal, whatever it was. Since our goal was as modest as they go — to prevent the launching of katyushas at Qiryat Shemona, which is unfortunately still happening today, though I hope it will stop — the operation will end as soon as katyushas stop landing in our towns, and no one will be able to claim that goals were not met, because there were no goals other than that.

[Talmor] Minister Yosi Beilin, we all share your hope. Thank you very much.

Israel: Sarid Criticizes Operation; Meridor Fears Premature End

TA2004094196 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0900 GMT 20 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Minister Yosi Sarid has criticized the way Operation Grapes of Wrath is being conducted. He says the military activity in Lebanon, which aimed to put an end to katyushas in the north, was necessary and legitimate, but he believes it should have been discontinued unilaterally but conditionally while the operation was at its peak, in order to avoid being at the mercy of the Americans, the French, and the Syrians. Those who thought Operation Grapes of Wrath was a surgical operation were wrong, because what we have now is an orthopedic operation, Minister Sarid added.

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Knesset Member Dan Meridor says that if the operation ends with almost no achievements after the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] used its strongest strategic arm, Israel's deterrent capability will be dealt a serious blow. Even at this time, the government must use its judgment and presence of mind in order to bring about the desirable outcome — namely, preventing any future threat to peaceful life in northern Israel.

The two men made these remarks to Qol Yisra'el's reporter this morning.

Israel: Vilna'i, Or on Lebanon; Special Knesset Session 22 Apr

TA2104150396 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1400 GMT 21 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The deputy chief of staff, Major General Matan Vilna'i, said the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] is preceding with Operation Grapes of Wrath as planned, and according to predetermined stages. Speaking to reporters, Vilna'i said the army is recovering from the blow delivered by the Qana village incident. He said before the incident it took all the necessary measures, is continuing with other steps, and hopes that such a tragedy will not happen again. Asked if there was place for a commission of inquiry, the deputy army chief said it was a professional military mistake and is being investigated. The army, he said, had nothing to hide, but there was no need for an official inquiry.

Deputy Defense Minister Ori Or says the IDF has received instructions to continue the operation. Speaking to community leaders in the north, Or said if Israel is fired upon, the army will return fire.

SHAS [Torah Observing Sephardim] Knesset Member Arye Der'i says he was against Operation Grapes of Wrath from the outset. In an interview with Israel Radio, Der'i said he thought it would not achieve anything and was simply a result of public pressure.

Coalition chairman, Ra'anan Kohen, has initiated a joint announcement from all factions in the Knesset to express support for IDF soldiers and residents of the north. The Knesset is scheduled to hold a special session tomorrow to discuss the situation. Prime Minister Peres will open the proceedings with a political statement.

Israel: Savir Sees Unsigned Agreement as Possibility

TA2204065396 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0405 GMT 22 Apr 96

[Telephone interview with Uri Savir, Israeli Foreign Ministry director general, by Arye Golan; place not given — live]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Golan] What are Christopher's chances of securing a cease-fire agreement between Israel and Hizballah before Independence Day — that is, either today or tomorrow?

[Savir] I cannot really tell you. I believe this is mainly up to the Syrians.

[Golan] Can you confirm that the main disagreement revolves around Israel's demand that the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] enjoy freedom of action to respond to attacks against it and against the SLA [South Lebanese Army] in the security zone?

[Savir] I am not sure that the main disagreement is around this or another point. I believe we have a deeper problem, which is the long-standing instability in Lebanon caused by pro-Iranian elements who were not reined in. As a result, there were attacks on Israel, peace in Lebanon was disrupted, and the peace process was upset.

What we have now is a genuine attempt on the part of the United States to stabilize the situation and create a new situation that will bring security to the Galilee and promote the peace process. This is really a deeper change which takes time. What we are seeing now is a very impressive diplomatic effort as a result of our military activities.

[Golan] Syria could stabilize the situation. Is Syria indeed prepared to vouch for the implementation of the agreement once it is attained and to guarantee that Hizballah will abide by the agreement? After all, Damascus leaders say that they will not be our policeman in Lebanon.

[Savir] They need not be a policeman at all. If they believe that they have special role in Lebanon and in the peace process, however, then it should also be their interest to stabilize the situation, seeing that negotiations are supposed to be held with Syria and Lebanon. It is hard to see negotiations taking place while Hizballah is given license to shoot.

[Golan] Is it our interest that Syria dominate the entire area north of the security zone in order to bring security there?

[Savir] No, I think our interest is to see Lebanon take charge of its own fate. We will not decide the nature

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of the relations between Lebanon and Syria. Ultimately, what is important to us is security in the Galilee, relative stability in Lebanon, and, above all, not to enable the Iranians — through Hizballah — to create instability, fire katyushas at the Galilee, and achieve the Iranian strategic goal of torpedoing the peace process. One must not forget what lies behind this effort.

[Golan] Sir, when the agreement is reached, will it be a written one? Of course, the question is: Who will sign it? Will al-Asad be prepared to sign it on behalf of Lebanon?

[Savir] No, I do not think that is the intention. In 1993, we had unwritten understandings, and the difficulty with such unwritten accords is that everybody interprets them differently and even remembers the words differently. The intention now is to reach a written agreement. Regardless of whether it is signed, we will have a document to which we will be able to refer.

[Golan] Could this agreement remain unsigned?

[Savir] It could remain unsigned. This point has not yet been discussed. What is important is not the words, the nature of the agreement, or its being signed but the political intentions behind it. I think that Syria and Lebanon realize today that it is impossible to unilaterally create instability for Israel, deprive it of security through Hizballah, and undermine security in Lebanon. The current effort is aimed at bringing about stability both in Lebanon and Israel and saving the peace process from the hands of Hizballah and the Iranians.

[Golan] Will the agreement include Israel's willingness to gradually pull out of the security zone?

[Savir] No, I believe that should be part of peace negotiations. We, for our part, are interested in holding such negotiations with Lebanon, but I am not sure that this will be possible in the near future.

[Golan] It has been noted that peace negotiations between Israel and Syria and Lebanon will resume as part of the understandings and accords that are to be attained now.

[Savir] It seems to me that the test of the other side will be their attitude toward Hizballah. Hizballah does not really want us to get out of Lebanon, because this would open the way to negotiations between us and the Lebanese. We are seeking the disbandment of Hizballah in the context of a peace agreement with Lebanon. If the other side realizes that there can be no peace agreement or negotiations while Hizballah enjoys free rein, then we will see negotiations taking place. We are interested in such negotiations because they are part of the comprehensive peace in the Middle East. Such negotiations would bring peace to the Galilee and security to the entire region in general.

[Golan] Uri Savir, thank you very much.

Israel: Peres, Christopher Hold News Conference

TA2104102796 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0940 GMT 21 Apr 96

[News conference by Israeli Prime Minister Shim'on Peres and U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher following their meeting at the Prime Minister's Office — live; indistinct passages due to superimposed translation into Hebrew; italicized passages within slantlines transcribed from English]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Peres] *Ladies and gentlemen, I would like to welcome wholeheartedly the secretary of state of the United States, who came over here at a very crucial moment, and is again trying to bring things together so we shall be able to proceed with the peace process and avoid dangerous exchanges of fire. May I say on the Israeli part just one or two remarks. People are asking what is the purpose of the Israeli operation. We didn't go to any operation because we had a purpose, but because we didn't have a choice but to do it [words indistinct] the Hizballah opened fire without any provocation at our forces and our civilian lives, and I believe that their purpose was to break the peace process and to prevent the continuation of the peace negotiations. For that reason what we are trying to make clear is that the peace process will be continued on all fronts in order to reach a comprehensive peace, and then again, we would like — until we should reach a peace agreement — to bring tranquillity to civilian life on both sides of the frontier and avoid exchanges of fire [words indistinct] over the security zone.*

May I also say that all the agreements that were reached until now, beginning with Camp David, going through Oslo, reaching the agreement with Jordan, continuing with the negotiations with Syria and Lebanon, was done through the good offices of the United States [words indistinct] in the nature and capacity of the United States diplomacy to bring a real peace to all parties in the Middle East. And we think that the attempt to negotiate must be organized. It cannot be chaotic, it cannot be done through many channels, and I am not [words indistinct] are having full trust and confidence in the American attempt to bring tranquillity for the time being and peace in the future to the Middle East.

We have heard from the secretary a report about his meeting yesterday in Damascus. We have provided him with our position. We are trying to reach a common ground and understanding. We are in the middle of

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the doing and making of such an understanding, and I think all of us will continue to work very hard and very seriously to end bloodshed and bring peace to this region. For that reason again, Mr. Secretary, I welcome you wholeheartedly here.

[Qol Yisra'el's Shlomo Raz] Mr. Prime Minister, I would like to know whether you and the secretary of state worked out some sort of cease-fire, and if so, when will it go into effect and how extensive will it be?

[Peres] We are in the middle of the work. When we complete the work we will clarify its nature.

[Raz] Can you specify the date of its implementation?

[Peres] No, I cannot. I believe it is a mistake to speak of a date. We have to deal with these things with patience and not nervously. If it takes a little more time, so be it. In my opinion it is more important to reach a good arrangement than to reach a bad arrangement quickly.

[Raz] In the past you said that while we want a cease-fire, the firing in Lebanon will go on if the katyusha attacks continue. Is this still the case? Is the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] continuing to operate in the framework of Operation Grapes of Wrath?

[Peres] Just as one cannot clap with just one hand, it is impossible to reach a cease-fire without two parties. The firing must stop on both sides.

[Unidentified correspondent] *Prime Minister Peres, there have been confirmed reports in the past week that arms have been shipped through Syria to the Hizballah forces in southern Lebanon. As a condition for signing a cease-fire, will you demand that Syria undertake to guarantee that future supplies of weapons will not be sent through its territory to Hizballah?*

[Peres] *I would rather not go into details about the negotiations ahead of time. I think we have to be patient for another period of time, hopefully some days, and then we shall make clear what are the necessary conditions for the two parties to reach a cease fire.*

[TV 2's 'Imanu'el Rosen] Mr. Prime Minister, will Israel — in the framework of a cease-fire — agree to undertake various restrictions regarding its ability to retaliate against Hizballah activity?

[Peres] Israel will defend itself. The right of self-defense cannot be questioned or compromised.

[Rosen] Does this mean that the security zone will not be included in the framework of a comprehensive cease-fire?

[Peres] I do not see any reason to add to what I have just said. What I said is quite clear.

[Unidentified correspondent] *Mr. Prime Minister, the foreign minister of Russia, Mr. Primakov, is apparently in Beirut today and is then coming here. Do you think it is a good idea to have diplomacy working on at least two fronts this way — three if you include the French — or is this getting in the way? Is it giving too many parties too many options to make too many arrangements to get a cease-fire and a following understanding?*

[Peres] *I made it clear we can have many fronts but one channel. If there will be more than one channel there will be total confusion. And the responsible channel that has both the experience and the mechanism to do so is the United States of America, and I think all parties will continue to work through this channel. We shall not reject to see anybody. Whoever wants to come in is welcome, but we cannot have three agreements on the same issue, because this will mean no agreement at all.*

Israel: Peres Meets With Italy's Agnelli on Lebanon Situation

TA1904154296 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1500 GMT 19 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Prime Minister Shim'on Peres said that Israel is resolutely determined to defend its citizens in the north under any conditions. At the same time, Israel was interested in attaining a cease-fire that would guarantee the security of its citizens and prevent suffering on all sides.

The prime minister made these remarks at a meeting with Italian Foreign Minister Suzanna Agnelli, who is the current president of the EU. Agnelli pointed out that she was interested in reaching a cease-fire and did not care whether it was the result of a U.S. or European initiative.

Israel: Russia's Primakov Meets With Peres; France's de Charrette Cancels Visit

TA2104152596 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1500 GMT 21 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Russian Foreign Minister Yevgeniy Primakov is now conferring with Prime Minister Shim'on Peres. Our political correspondent Shlomo Raz reports that there are rumors that he has brought a message from Syria.

Earlier, Primakov met with Foreign Minister Ehud Baraq and expressed his country's concern about the dangerous situation in the region. Baraq blamed Hizballah and said the katyusha shelling must be stopped and quiet restored along the northern border. Baraq called on his Russian counterpart to influence the Iranian regime to cease its efforts to torpedo the peace process.

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[Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew at 1505 GMT on 21 April adds that "French Foreign Minister Herve de Charette has called off his planned visit to Israel on 22 April."]

Israel: Russia's Primakov 'Demands' Role in Talks; France's de Charette To Meet Peres

TA2104163296 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1600 GMT 21 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Prime Minister Shim'on Peres has ended his meeting with Russian Foreign Minister Yevgeniy Primakov. At the meeting, Primakov demanded a role for his country in the negotiations, claiming that it is a co-sponsor of the peace process. Primakov rejected Israel's claims that Iran is transferring katyushas to Hizballah.

Before the meeting with Mr. Peres, Primakov met with Foreign Minister Ehud Baraq, who asked Primakov to use his influence on the Iranian Government to have it stop trying to torpedo the peace process.

Our political correspondent Shlomo Raz reports that tonight Prime Minister Peres and Ministers Baraq and Beilin will meet with French Foreign Minister de Charette, who is also involved in the efforts to mediate the crisis.

Israel: France's de Charette Meets With Peres, Vows To Coordinate With U.S.

TA2204053196 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0405 GMT 22 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] French Foreign Minister Herve de Charette conferred with Prime Minister Shim'on Peres and Minister Yosi Beilin at the Defense Ministry in Tel Aviv last night and updated them on his talks in Damascus and Tehran. At the end of the meeting, the visiting minister said that France will henceforth coordinate its moves with the United States and with all the other mediators in the crisis. Our correspondent 'Eran Liechtenstein reports:

[Begin Liechtenstein recording] The French delegation was very optimistic about the chances of bringing about an immediate cease- fire in Lebanon. Even more so was French Foreign Minister Herve de Charette, who had heard Iranian Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati agree with him that the crisis calls for a political solution, though not before de Charette had told him that a positive position on the part of Iran is a prerequisite for what de Charette termed a critical dialogue between Iran and the EU. France is prepared to maintain such a dialogue with Tehran, de Charette's spokesman said, based on the assumption that this will help fight terror and promote the peace process in the region, particularly between Israel and Lebanon. In Damascus, President al-Asad saluted the French initiative, de Charette said. [passage omitted]

Syria aspires to a solution of the conflict, de Charette said. He got the impression that there is mutual willingness on the part of both sides to secure a political solution and that al-Asad's strategic goal is indeed peace with Israel.

During last night's meeting at the Defense Ministry, which was also attended by Minister Yosi Beilin and the prime minister's aide-de-camp Dani Yatom, Peres proposed to de Charette to work in conjunction with Israel on any formulation regarding a cease-fire. In other words, Peres told his guest that he would prefer the French to coordinate their efforts with the other mediators, even though Israel recognizes France's long-standing special interests in Lebanon. [end recording]

Israel: Russia's Primakov Ready To Influence Iran To Restrain Hizballah

TA2104185596 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1800 GMT 21 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Russian Foreign Minister Yevgeniy Primakov told Prime Minister Shim'on Peres in their meeting in Jerusalem tonight that the Russians are prepared to use their influence on Iran to urge it to restrain Hizballah. Primakov stressed that there are various currents in Iran and that not all the public figures support terrorism.

Prime Minister Peres said that Iran supports Hizballah, Islamic Jihad, and Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] and transfers war materiel, training equipment, and funds to them. He noted that not a single word uttered by the Iranians can be trusted.

At the meeting, the Russian foreign minister offered his country's services in the cease-fire negotiations and the political process. Our political correspondent Shlomo Raz reports that Mr. Peres said it is preferable that a single element be responsible for the mediating effort. [passage omitted]

Israel: Weizman Urges Continuation of Lebanon Operation

TA2104191696 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1900 GMT 21 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] President 'Ezer Weizman said that Israel must proceed with Operation Grapes of Wrath, be firm in its positions, and not cave in. The president made the remarks in response to a question by our correspondent Yitzhaq Feller about what Israel must do to assure that the operation does not end

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as Operation Accountability did. President Weizman spoke after his meeting with Russian Foreign Minister Yevgeniy Primakov. President Weizman believes that the Russians want to reassert their influence in the region, but said that while the presidents of Russia and the United States talk love, their foreign ministers do not see things in the same light. The Russian foreign minister came to the president's residence after his meeting with Prime Minister Peres and Foreign Minister Baraq in Jerusalem.

Israel: Jerusalem 'Furious' Over Russia's Primakov Criticism of Operation

TA2204090896 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew 22 Apr 96 pp 1, 19

[Report by political correspondent Shim'on Schiffer]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Jerusalem is furious about statements made by Russian Foreign Minister Yevgeniy Primakov, who said that Israel launched Operation Grapes of Wrath and brutally attacked Lebanon out of electoral considerations and in order to convince the Israeli public to vote for Shim'on Peres.

The Russian foreign minister voiced such harsh remarks on two occasions: The first time was at a meeting with Professor 'Aliza Shenhar, Israeli ambassador in Moscow, held before the Russian minister's visit to the Middle East. The second time was during Primakov's meeting with Prime Minister Peres yesterday.

Ambassador Shenhar sent a highly classified report to the bureaus of Prime Minister Peres and Foreign Minister Ehud Baraq, stating that her meeting with Primakov had been very difficult. The Russian minister screamed at her and said that Peres is getting bad advice from his advisers. He offered Russia's services in mediating between Israel and Hizballah. Primakov also noted Russia's wide- ranging ties with Iran. [passage omitted]

Primakov arrived in Israel yesterday afternoon and held a meeting with Prime Minister Peres which was described by several of its participants as difficult and "a dialogue of the deaf." Among other things, Primakov told Peres: "Your attacks in Lebanon are completely out of proportion to Hizballah's activities. Ultimately, you have barely eliminated a few Hizballah fighters while killing over a hundred civilians. If Israel were to seek to convene a conference in Sharm al-Shaykh today, no heads of state would come. You cannot imagine the anti-Israel current in the Arab world, even in countries that maintain good relations with you." Primakov went on to say: "I did not come here to spoil things for Christopher. If you want only one mediation track, that is your right. All we seek is to help you end this fiasco."

Participants on the Israeli side said Primakov's remarks were reminiscent of "the dark days of Brezhnev." Peres "came down hard" on Primakov and firmly rejected the Russian's offers to mediate and criticism of Israel.

The government nevertheless decided to treat Primakov with the proper respect and sent Foreign Minister Baraq to meet him at Ben- Gurion airport. Last night, Primakov had dinner with President 'Ezer Weizman. This morning, he will leave for Damascus to pursue his mediation efforts.

Israel: Peres Addresses Knesset on Lebanon

TA2204081996 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0715 GMT 22 Apr 96

[Political announcement by Israeli Prime Minister Shim'on Peres at an extraordinary session of the Knesset on Operation Grapes of Wrath — live]

[FBIS Translated Text] Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset: Operation Grapes of Wrath began 12 days ago with the aim of putting an end to the firing of katyushas at Qiryat Shemona and the Galilee settlements. [heckling by Tamar Gozansky of HADASH, the Democratic Front for Peace and Equality]

The firing of katyushas, just like the operations of Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement], were meant to sabotage the peace process in the Middle East. The events in Tel Aviv, Ashqelon, and Jerusalem, just like the firing at the north, came from the same source and were based on the same logic. The IDF [Israel Defense Forces] has and will continue to confront these provocations with its full military might while considering the complexity of the situation.

On behalf of the government, this house, and the nation, I would like to express our appreciation to the IDF, the chief of staff, the General Staff, the Northern Command, and the commanders and the soldiers in the air, ground, and naval forces for their responsible and persistent endurance in this operation. [Gozansky continues heckling and is ousted from the plenum]

On behalf of this house, I would also like to express our appreciation to the residents of the settlements in the Galilee Panhandle and other northern locations from Qiryat Shemona to Nahariyya. The continued suffering of the civilian population, which is occasionally forced to spend days and nights in the shelters, is unbearable and deserves every appreciation.

Members of the Knesset, our main objective is to restore to these dear and good citizens a safe life, just like anywhere else in the State of Israel, free of the horror of shellings and of the tension and anxiety which they

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sustained, and to secure their natural right to go to work every day without having to worry about sending their children to school in the face of threats or dangers. This is our duty, and we will fulfill it.

I would like to announce to the Knesset that we instructed government ministers to give top priority to the implementation of the necessary steps within the jurisdiction of their ministries with regard to the confrontation line in the north. A ministerial committee set up for that purpose toured the settlements along the border and met with local mayors to ascertain the needs first hand and to find appropriate solutions. Government ministries have allocated considerable budgets to help local authorities during the operation.

The government decided to give full compensation to individuals and to businesses in the north which were hurt as a result of the situation. Qiryat Shemona, which sustained damage and attacks, will be given special national priority and localized treatment in order to restore life in the town to normal. A multifaceted plan to develop the settlements along the northern border, which will involve the investment of hundreds of millions of shekels, was approved. The Prime Minister's Office made special arrangements to extend emergency services to the residents of the confrontation line.

In addition to all this, however, I must point to the spirit of volunteerism, sympathy, and mutual aid evinced by the Israeli people at such times. Authorities, institutions, business firms, private factories, artists, and ordinary people throughout the country opened their hearts and homes to the residents of the north with warmth and a deep feeling of sharing and empathy. Thanks to them, this difficult period for the children of the north turned into a more pleasant experience, into a source of encouragement and happiness. May they all be blessed.

Members of the Knesset, we did not launch Operation Grapes of Wrath because we enjoy war. This government does not have to prove its desire for peace and its willingness to effect a historic reconciliation with our surrounding neighbors. This has been our active policy, in keeping with the edict: Seek peace and pursue it. This operation does not constitute a deviation from the path of peace. On the contrary, it is necessary to salvage the peace. This is not an operation of choice but a no-choice operation. It is the fulfillment of a clear-cut, national duty toward self-defense on one hand and the defeat of the attempt to annihilate the peace process on the other.

Several countries and organizations — Iran, Libya, Iraq, Hamas, the Islamic Jihad, and Hizballah — have united and, at times, have even coordinated their positions in order to annihilate the peace process. Hamas and the Islamic Jihad operated inside Israel, and since the Sharm al-Shaykh conference, Hizballah has stepped up its attacks on the IDF and the SLA [South Lebanese Army] in south Lebanon without any provocation, planting roadside bombs, sending suicide bombers on gliders, and firing rockets at our settlements.

Despite this clear and intentional escalation through Hizballah's violent actions inspired by Iran and despite the jingoistic arrogance of its leaders and their presumption to determine the way of life of the settlements along our northern border, we tried the political way before we launched the military operation, because weapons are used only after thorough consideration and after exploring other means. Only when we realized that all the diplomatic means had failed did we see no choice but to launch a military operation, which began at the end of the Passover holiday.

Clear and definite parameters were set for the operation. This is not a presumptuous military operation with objectives that are not necessitated by reality. I know that a military operation cannot solve all the outstanding problems between us and Lebanon or between us and Syria. Full peace can be attained only through political negotiations between Israel and Lebanon or between Israel and Syria, and I hope these will resume in the days ahead.

I dealt with security for many years, and I have had enough experience with wars and battles to know that a military operation is sometimes essential but is not necessarily a magic cure.

I am proud that a government under my leadership got the IDF out of the Lebanese swamp in 1985, and we have no intention of sending it back there. This government has no plans to expand the security zone in south Lebanon. We do not want to hurt the Lebanese or Syrian Armies or to get tangled up in a war with them. Operation Grapes of Wrath has no time limits, but its objectives are clear. As said, the objective is to bring durable peace to the northern settlements, stabilize the situation in south Lebanon, stop the katyusha attacks, and make the resumption of the peace process possible.

The operation is based on the use of sophisticated and accurate weapons, which reflects the IDF's advantage in human and technological abilities, mobility and intelligence information, and accurate pinpointed hits. In the guidelines for the operation, the government determined that civilians or civilian targets should not be hit and that the operation should concentrate solely on Hizballah installations and the terrorists themselves. As a rule, this guideline has been upheld. Nonetheless, however much one tries to observe an ethical use of

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arms, military operations involve accidents and innocent civilian casualties.

This was not our intention. As is known, at the beginning of the operation, we took the necessary measures to get the civilian population out of the battle zones and separate it from the Hizballah terrorists so that it would come to no harm. In contrast, Hizballah opted for the opposite tactics out of cynical cruelty. It hid among concentrations of refugees who had fled the battle zones, and it was from such places that it fired at Israel in order to draw fire at the civilians and endanger their lives. The tragedy in Qana and any other harm sustained by civilians are first and foremost an appalling human tragedy which we regret; however, we know that it was not intentional, it did not serve our objectives, and it totally contravened the nature of the operation. It came about under battle conditions, when an Israeli unit was attacked from all sides and fired back in self-defense. Nevertheless, we will look into this incident in a responsible and orderly manner. The IDF has already started investigating the issue, and the findings will be submitted to the government or the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee.

The horrendous tragedy in Qana and the suffering of Lebanon in general are entirely the fault of the terrorist organizations, with Hizballah primary among them. I am aware of the suffering of the civilian population in Lebanon. The residents of the Galilee also suffer, and it is obvious that if there is no peace on this side of the border, there cannot be quiet on the other side. War can be one-sided, but quiet must be two-sided.

Hizballah used the villages and the civilian population as a basis and a shelter for their activities against Israel, the IDF, and the SLA in the security zone. It tried to dictate untenable rules of the game that would leave it immune to an IDF's response because of its presence in the heart of civilian villages.

Such a reality cannot continue. The terrorists have no immunity anywhere, in no location. Beirut is no more privileged than Qiryat Shemona, Tyre is no more privileged than Nahariyya, and Sidon is no more privileged than Ma'alot. If katyushas fall on Qiryat Shemona, then Hizballah targets, including those in Beirut, will not be immune from harm. In contrast, if Qiryat Shemona, Nahariyya, Ma'alot, Margaliyyot, Dovev, Hurfaysh, Fassuta, Mi'ilya, Metulla, and Misgav 'Am have quiet, there will be quiet in Beirut, Tyre, and Sidon. [heckling by HADASH's Hashim Mahamid]

Our hand is outstretched in peace. Can you protect Qiryat Shemona? Have you heard that it is being attacked? Can you protect Jerusalem and Tel Aviv? Can you stop the actions of Hamas and Hizballah? In whose name are you speaking? [Mahamid continues heckling and is ousted from the plenum]

Mr. Speaker, openness to peace and strength in confrontation are two sides of the same coin. The guideline given to the IDF is to concentrate on pinpointed and accurate hits on Hizballah targets and not to expand attacks when they are not necessary. This way, we are not destroying the villages in south Lebanon, despite the fact that we had to drive the civilian population out of them to prevent the people from coming to any harm by the fire directed at the terrorist targets in their midst. When the operation ends, Lebanese citizens will be able to return to their villages and to their normal lives, in parallel with the return to normal life of our Galilee settlements.

We are not the enemies of the Shiite or Christian population in Lebanon. We do not wish them ill. On the contrary, we aspire to peaceful coexistence. We aspire to good-neighbor relations with all residents of Lebanon.

Mr. Speaker, Israel did not occupy the security zone; rather, Lebanon abandoned it. Israel is in south Lebanon for the purpose of its defense. This is a small and temporary presence, prompted by circumstances that are undesirable both to us and to Lebanon. As long as Lebanon remains militarily divided, it will not be able to be territorially united.

For over 20 years, since the end of Israel's Independence War, our border with Lebanon was the most quiet and serene border, and friendly relations emerged between people on both sides of the border, even if there were no formal relations between the two countries. [heckling by Talib al-Sani' of the Arab Democratic Party, who is subsequently ousted from the plenum]

Unfortunately, Lebanon abandoned its southern district to the domination of the terrorist organizations, which have been operating from there against Israel and, by so doing, destroyed Lebanon's sovereignty. What compelled Israel to establish the security zone is this abandonment and the bitter experience of the northern settlements. We would not have needed it had the Lebanese Government not lost control over the south and abandoned it to the hands of a nonsovereign and irresponsible armed presence which reports to a foreign country and is not subordinate to the Lebanese regime.

Members of the Knesset, I once again declare that we have not and never had any territorial claim on Lebanon. We do not crave either its soil or its water. We accept the international border between us and Lebanon, and we have no interest whatsoever in remaining in any part of it if there is no need.

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I once again call on the Lebanese Government to conduct negotiations on a peace treaty with Israel which will be based on its territorial integrity, its full sovereignty over all the areas of its country, the uprooting of any armed terrorist presence from its soil, and arrangements that will guarantee security and tranquillity on both sides of the border.

In the last few years, the Lebanese Government made an impressive effort to rebuild the land of cedars after the long bitter years of horrendous civil war. Israel feels great sympathy toward the Lebanese Government's efforts, but all these efforts might go up in smoke if, surrendering to foreigners, Lebanon continues to allow an additional armed presence to operate on its soil against Israel. Peace between Israel and Lebanon is natural, vital, and possible without any difficulty if and when Lebanon once again becomes a truly free and sovereign country.

There is no real conflict between our two countries. On the contrary, the geography and history of the Land of Israel and of Lebanon point to a natural partnership and to a great potential for mutual commerce, tourism, and variegated cooperation which could restore to Lebanon its glory and its proper place in the Middle East. If there is still no peace between Israel and Lebanon, it is through no fault of Israel's; perhaps it is not Lebanon's fault either, seeing that it remains the captive of organizations which receive their orders from the outside.

Mr. Speaker, Hizballah is in Lebanon against Lebanon's will. The villages controlled by Hizballah are, to a large extent, occupied Iranian territory inside Lebanon. As long as Lebanon does not free itself from the Iranian occupation, it will not be sovereign over its territory and will not be able to rebuild itself and to live in peace in its midst and its surroundings.

The Iranian revolution is a sad revolution. It did not advance the Iranian people but pushed them backward. It failed all the way through and sowed in its wake violence, dark fanaticism, despair, and lack of hope whose clear and ultimate expression is suicidal terrorism. Hizballah, as well as Hamas and the Islamic Jihad, are branches of the failed Khomeynistic regime which manufactures and exports terror and murder and which threatens world peace.

Present day Tehran is the enemy of peace, because the regime of the ayatollahs, which has no new message or hope, needs a real or imaginary enemy in order to justify its very existence. It fights tooth and nail against progress, human freedom, freedom of expression, and the aspirations of peace of people in the region because it fears them since they contradict its very essence. That is why this dark regime projects hatred and hostility. It rejoices in blood, sanctifies death, and spreads an evil spirit of violence, introversion, and oppression. It is an ideology of lunacy and murder under a false and fake religious guise.

Members of the Knesset, the peace process in the Middle East is the horror of Khomeynism; it is the most horrible nightmare of the priests of death who distorted a great faith and turned it into Moloch. It makes them lose sleep. They are haunted by the fear of peace, and they make desperate efforts to sabotage, curb, and reverse the process and history. They use unscrupulous means; they violate all the prohibitions of international treaties and the norms in relations between nations in order to sow terror in a bid to amputate any bud of friendship and peace.

They have no chance. They will not be able to turn back the wheel of history. They will continue to despair at the sight of their final battle in a lost war against peace, to see one defeat following another until they will descend from the stage of history into damnation.

The State of Israel is not Iran's enemy. The Khomeynistic regime turned itself into the enemy of every peace-seeking country without any real reason. Until the Iranian revolution, our countries shared relations of friendship and cooperation, and there was an Israeli Embassy in the Iranian capital. Since ancient times, the Jewish people have remembered the grace of King Cyrus of Persia and his call to the Jews to return to Jerusalem: Whoever is among you of all his people, may the Lord his God be with him. Let him go up.

We wish the Iranian people a more appropriate and human regime which, instead of fighting the peace process, will become part of it for the benefit and well-being of Iran's citizens and for the benefit of the entire region.

Mr. President, I have no doubt whatsoever that the tentacles of the fundamentalist terror engendered by Tehran — Hizballah, Hamas, and the Islamic Jihad — will not abandon their efforts to hurt us and halt the peace process. I have no doubt that they will fail to attain their goal, but it is hard to promise zero terror attacks. Israel's security branches and its intelligence community will continue to invest every possible effort, away from the public eye, to thwart these terrorist designs. I must point out that the Palestinian Authority [PA], too, has recently been making a noteworthy effort, which our security officials believe has been successful, to hurt the terror infrastructure within its boundaries, to arrest Hamas and Islamic Jihad terrorists, and to locate and impound arms and ammunition caches and other sabotage material.

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These organizations pose a threat both to peace and to the PA. Neither does 'Arafat defend us, nor do we defend 'Arafat; he is defending his own authority and peace. They want to topple him no less than they want to bring us down, and we will defend our lives. As the PA perseveres and scores success, the conditions and atmosphere for progress in the peace process between us and in the permanent arrangement with the Palestinians will be created.

The war on terror and the strive for peace are two sides of the same coin and are interdependent. The more terror is curbed, the closer peace will be. Israel is not exempt from making a parallel and simultaneous effort to promote peace and forestall terror.

Members of the Knesset, I said that Operation Grapes of Wrath will not be discontinued through loss of patience, but this does not mean that we want to pursue it unnecessarily. We welcome the efforts currently under way to restore security and resume the peace process. For obvious reasons, I will not detail the proposals and ideas being discussed between us and the other sides, between Jerusalem and the other relevant capitals. The most serious negotiations are those led by U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher, who has been shuttling between Jerusalem and Damascus and who is due back here this evening with Syria's answers. I can assure the Knesset that under no circumstances will the government settle for less than the defined goals of Operation Grapes of Wrath and that we will not agree to return to the situation that existed prior to this operation.

The limited military operation we launched is a result of the need to protect the lives of our citizens in the north, but our aspiration was and remains peace rather than war, friendship rather than hostility, good-neighbor relations rather than occupation. The Israeli Government will continue to uphold a resolute policy of peace and security. We will not forgo peace, and we will not abandon security, because only a secure and strong Israel will reach the destination of peace. The IDF's might, its possession of the best weapons, and our qualitative advantages in the battlefield and in modern weaponry, and above all, the excellent spirit and quality of its warriors, officers, and soldiers will be the guarantee and backbone of any peace arrangement. They are the ones who provide us with a response when necessary, as was proven yet again in Operation Grapes of Wrath. They are also the ones who will provide us security in times of peace.

Mr. Speaker, the purpose of the operation is to restore security to northern Israel and peace to the entire region.

Israel: 'Abducted' American To Be Killed Unless Lebanon Acts Stop

TA1904172596 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Hebrew 1710 GMT 19 Apr 96

[Announcer-read report]

[FBIS Translated Text] Our news editor 'Eran Ben-Porat has handed me a report just in from the news agencies. This evening, an anonymous caller phoned a correspondent for Qol Yisra'el in Arabic and said that a terrorist organization has abducted an American citizen in the territories. The hostage will be executed tomorrow morning unless Israel stops its attacks in Lebanon. American sources in Israel said that until now, they have no information about any kidnapped U.S. national.

Israel: U.S. Warns Citizens; Abduction Report Believed 'Cruel Hoax'

TA2004153496 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1400 GMT 20 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The U.S. Embassy in Tel Aviv has warned American citizens here to exercise caution in light of recent events and threats from Hizballah and other extremist groups. The embassy has investigated the report of an American who was kidnapped in the West Bank or Gaza yesterday and has found no evidence of a missing American. The embassy believes the report to be a cruel hoax.

Israel: HADASH, ADP Submit No-Confidence Motion Over Lebanon

TA2204101796 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1000 GMT 22 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] HADASH [Democratic Front for Peace and Equality] and the Arab Democratic Party [ADP] have submitted a motion of no confidence in the government in the wake of Prime Minister Shim'on Peres' political announcement to the Knesset. Our correspondent Hayim Hecht reports that according to the regulations, the vote will be held on 29 April.

Israel: Official Says Postponement of Peres U.S. Visit Considered

TA2204065696 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 22 Apr 96 p 2

[Report by Steve Rodan]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Prime Minister Shim'on Peres, preoccupied with Operation Grapes of Wrath, has had little time to prepare for his visit to the US, and some of

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his aides have suggested postponing it, a senior official said yesterday.

He said neither Peres nor his aides have been able to develop the list of defense and diplomatic proposals they had hoped to raise with US officials during the visit, scheduled for April 28-30. These proposals include key strategic issues, such as a US-Israeli alliance.

US and Israeli defense officials have been discussing the agenda for Peres's visit for the past month. Currently, the head of the Pentagon's Ballistic Missile Defense Organization, Gen. Malcolm O'Neill, is here trying to formulate an accord on theater anti- missile defense. Later this week, Defense Ministry Director-General David 'Ivri flies to Washington to hold another round of preparatory talks with Defense Department officials.

Still, Israeli officials acknowledged that Peres and his aides have been preoccupied by Lebanon. One official raised the possibility that Peres might be forced to stay to oversee the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] campaign against Hizbullah, should US Secretary of State Warren Christopher fail to achieve a ceasefire.

Sources close to Peres dismissed the prospect of a delay in his trip, but acknowledged that Operation Grapes of Wrath has topped the diplomatic and security agenda over the last two weeks, thus preventing officials from properly preparing his agenda in the US.

During his visit, Peres is expected to raise a host of strategic issues, including cooperation in anti-missile defense, counterterrorism, guidelines on the use of civilian satellites and development of a US-Israel alliance. The last issue is regarded as requiring the most preparation, the sources said, as Israel must ensure that any pact does not limit its freedom of action.

Israel: Baraq—Fight Must Continue Until State of Talks Clarified

TA2204082596 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0800 GMT 22 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Foreign Minister Ehud Baraq says Israel will accept any arrangement in Lebanon that will guarantee that no katyushas will be launched at the Galilee and that the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] will be able to operate in southern Lebanon. Minister Baraq believes that the state of the negotiations will become clear over the next two days. Until that time, according to Baraq, we must not panic and should continue the fight against katyushas and Hizballah targets in Lebanon. Our correspondent Ron Nesi'el reports that Minister Baraq spoke to reporters following a memorial ceremony for nine foreign service employees killed in terrorist attacks overseas.

Israel: Peres Discloses Iranian Missile Shipment Seized in Brussels

TA2204092396 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew 22 Apr 96 pp 1, 19

[Report by political correspondent Shim'on Schiffer]

[FBIS Translated Text] Officials in Jerusalem are considering publishing photographs of missiles recently seized in Brussels during an attempt to smuggle them from Iran to terrorist organizations in Europe.

Prime Minister Peres recently revealed that Iranian weapons were seized in Belgium and Germany. These weapons were to be used in attacks against Jewish targets in Europe. It has now been disclosed that Peres was referring to a shipment of missiles which were concealed among a cargo of spices and loaded on a ship on its way from Iran to an Iranian spice merchant in Brussels. The missiles were to be delivered to terrorists, who planned to fire them at Israeli and Jewish targets in Europe.

Israel has received the pictures and shown them to U.S. Administration officials.

Israel: 'Complete' Closure Imposed on Territories Until 25 Apr

TA2204043596 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0400 GMT 22 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] A complete closure has been imposed on the territories until Thursday morning [25 April], after Memorial Day ceremonies and Independence Day celebrations. However, Palestinian officials and people requiring medical care will be allowed through.

Israel: Deployment of Norwegians in Hebron Meant To Boost 'Arafat

TA2104161696 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1400 GMT 21 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] An international monitoring force will be stationed in Hebron this week. In order to streamline its deployment, this force will be composed exclusively of Norwegians. Israel agreed to this in order to allow Palestinian Authority [PA] Chairman Yasir 'Arafat to present a tangible achievement to the members of the Palestine National Council [PNC], which is scheduled to convene in Gaza within the next few days. Our political correspondent Udi Segal reports.

[Begin Segal recording] The IDF [Israel Defense Forces] may withdraw from Hebron next month, even before elections are held in Israel. This was disclosed by a senior political source in Jerusalem. This is on the

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condition that the Palestinian Charter is amended. Israel took the first step in this direction at the end of last week, when, at a meeting between Foreign Ministry legal adviser Yo'el Singer and Dr. Sa'ib 'Urayqat, it was agreed that an international monitoring force, TIPH [Temporary International Presence in Hebron], will enter the city this week, even before the IDF pulls out. This is mainly a symbolic gesture designed to enable 'Arafat to show the PNC members that Israel is already making preparations for a withdrawal from the city. [passage omitted]

The Palestinians in Hebron welcomed the decision to station the international monitors in the city prior to the IDF withdrawal. Nevertheless, they stressed that they would not agree to the international monitoring force coming in place of a Palestinian force in the city. [passage omitted]

Hebron Mayor Mustafa al-Natshah today said that the vanguard of the international force would arrive within several days. This force will only deploy in a small part of the city. Al-Natshah said that the Israeli withdrawal must conform to the agreement with the Palestinians. The IDF is supposed to withdraw from 85 percent of the city, with the international force deploying over 15 percent of the remaining area. The residents of Hebron have not forgotten that the PNC is due to convene tomorrow. They have also heard the declarations by Israeli officials that the deployment of the international force may permit 'Arafat to portray this as a personal accomplishment on the way to an IDF withdrawal from the city. Mustafa al-Natshah clarified today that the Palestinians will not countenance any attempt to replace Palestinian forces with others. [passage omitted] [end recording]

In reaction, the Likud declared that the stationing of UN forces in Hebron would lead to the Lebanonization of the city. Likud campaign staffers noted that the residents of northern Israel suffer on a daily basis from the UN's inability to maintain security.

Israel: Katyusha Rockets Cause 'Serious Damage,' No Casualties

TA1904132396 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1300 GMT 19 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Katyusha rockets landed on a settlement in the Galilee Panhandle a short while ago and caused serious damage to property. There were no casualties. This afternoon, katyusha rockets also landed in the western Galilee. There were no casualties, and no damage was caused. This was reported by our correspondents Ilan Ro'e and Shim'on Vilna'i.

Israel: Military Provides Roundup of Katyusha Attacks, Casualties

TA2104160596 Jerusalem GOVERNMENT PRESS OFFICE in English 1400 GMT 21 Apr 96

["Communicated by IDF Spokesman"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The following is a summary of the Katyusha attacks launched by Hizballah since the beginning of "Operation Grapes of Wrath", 12.04.96:

Date	# in Sec. Zone	# in Israel	Casualties	Total
12/4	10	31	5 civilians wounded	41
13/4	—	11	—	11
14/4	5	41	3 civilians (lightly wounded)	46
15/4	16	45	8 civilians (3 lightly, 5 for shock)	61
16/4	4	55	6 civilians wounded	59
17/4	14	53	5 civilians wounded	67
18/4	5	33	4 civilians wounded	38
19/4	15	50	—	65
TOTALS:	69	319		388

Israel: Gen. Levin Meets UNIFIL Commander on Shelling Incidents

TA1904144296 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1400 GMT 19 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Major General 'Amiram Levin, the commander of the IDF's [Israel Defense Forces] Northern Command, met with UNIFIL [UN Interim Force in Lebanon] Commander Stanislaw Wozniak to discuss ways to prevent shelling of the kind that occurred in Kafr Qana in south Lebanon.

Maj. Gen. Levin expressed regret over the killing of civilians at the UNIFIL base and the wounding of UNIFIL soldiers. The Israeli general nevertheless clarified that the IDF had been following instructions by retaliating against Hizballah fire which had been directed at our forces. Maj. Gen. Levin asserted that the IDF had not been in possession of detailed information

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with regard to the presence of civilians at the base in Kafr Qana.

Our military affairs correspondent Karmela Menashe reports that both officers discussed technical coordination in order to improve the level of communications between the IDF and UNIFIL. The UNIFIL commander also spoke by telephone with Chief of Staff Amnon Shahaq.

Maj. Gen. Levin also met with local council heads along the confrontation line in northern Israel.

Israel: IDF Spokesman Reports Air Raids, Safe Return of Planes

TA2204071896 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0700 GMT 22 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Overnight, the Israel Air Force raided terrorist targets in Tyre and in the villages of Shaqra, Kafra, and Khirbat Silm. This was announced by the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] spokesman. All our planes returned safely.

Israel: Israeli Arabs Declare Strike To Protest Lebanon Incident

TA1904164996 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1600 GMT 19 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Arab sector in Israel will strike tomorrow to protest the killing of civilians in the Lebanese village of Kafr Qana yesterday. This was decided by the Supreme Arab Follow-Up Committee, which convened in Shefar'am this afternoon.

Our correspondent Qobi Mandel reports that the committee decided to declare two days of mourning tomorrow and on 21 April. Black flags will be raised at all public institutions in the Arab sector. The committee also decided not to meet with Prime Minister Shim'on Peres on the incidents in Lebanon until the end of Operation Grapes of Wrath.

[Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew at 1600 GMT on 19 April reports that "the forum of confrontation line settlements expressed amazement at the demonstrations in the Arab sector against Operation Grapes of Wrath. Our correspondent Shim'on Vilna'i reports that the forum proposes that the Israeli Arab demonstrators express solidarity with the confrontation line settlements and the Arab villages under fire and called on them to host frightened children. The forum also proposed that the Israeli Arab community urge the Lebanese Government to quash Hizballah, which was indiscriminately firing Katyusha rockets."]

Israel: 5 Arrested in Clashes at Nazareth March; Strike Observed

TA2004153296 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1400 GMT 20 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Police arrested five people during clashes in Nazareth today at a protest march against Israeli military actions in Lebanon. Police broke up the march and used tear gas to keep the protesters away from the main street in the town. A police van was pelted with stones. Israeli Arabs observed a commercial strike today, and schools were closed to protest events in Lebanon. Many of the protesters carried black flags. Some of the speakers urged Israeli Arabs to abstain instead of voting for Shim'on Peres for prime minister.

Israel: IDF Actions in Lebanon Detailed; Cease-Fire Impact Viewed

TA2004185196 Jerusalem Channel 2 Television Network in Hebrew 1700 GMT 20 Apr 96

[Talk between Anchorman Gay Bekhor in the studio and army affairs correspondent Roni Daniyel in Qiryat Shemona — live]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Bekhor] The IDF [Israel Defense Forces] activity continues, and the situation along the northern border has not quieted down. The Israel Air Force [IAF] resumed its attacks in south Lebanon today in an attempt to hit the locations from which the katyusha rockets are launched. Another focus for IDF activity was naval bombardments along the Tyre-Sidon highway. IDF artillery continued to shell targets in Lebanon, but less intensively than during the first days of Operation Grapes of Wrath. Our army affairs correspondent Roni Daniyel is here with the details.

[Daniyel] The IDF is continuing to fire at Hizballah targets. We just heard the reports of shelling, and we can clearly discern plumes of smoke where they hit their target. However, it must be noted that this shelling activity does not conform to the IDF's original plan. It is very low key and mainly comes in retaliation to katyusha volleys, while attempting to hit the katyusha launcher and its operator, without much success. Since the beginning of Operation Grapes of Wrath, Hizballah has fired approximately 500 katyusha rockets at Galilee settlements and is managing to maintain a fixed level of activity despite Israel's efforts to contain them. Most of the katyusha rockets fired at the Galilee Panhandle are launched from the area of al-Nabatiyah and the surrounding villages. The prevailing assessment is that even after 10 days, there are still squads hiding inside the villages that are capable of continuing to fire katyusha rockets toward Israel at the present rate of fire for a long time.

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The IAF attacked targets in Lebanon four times today. Again, while searching for katyusha rocket launchers near villages. Other sites, such as Hizballah command centers, were also hit. The use of helicopters against such targets guarantees more accurate hits, a constraint that has become imperative in the wake of the Kafr Qana incident. The Tyre-Sidon road was also hit today. This is what remains of the Lebanese coastal highway. The Lebanese media reports that Israel Navy gunships are also shelling the coast and not merely enforcing a sea blockade. The damage to the roads naturally makes it more difficult for the refugees from the south to move northward, and IDF sources estimated that the destruction of the roads will also encumber Hizballah's efforts to receive reinforcements and ammunition. Hizballah and the IDF are continuing to exchange fire, with a possible cease-fire in the background. The assessment is that the shelling will increase after the parties agree on a deadline for a cease-fire.

[Bekhor] Assuming that a cease-fire is achieved shortly, has the IDF achieved its original goals?

[Daniyel] No, the IDF has not completed the goals it set for itself in Operation Grapes of Wrath. If the cease-fire and the accompanying understandings are based on Operation Accountability, then the IDF and the Israeli Government have gained no military or political benefits from the military operation. It should be remembered that the IDF embarked on this operation out of the understandings reached following Operation Accountability, because the framework of these understandings did not permit Israeli civilians to live in peace or allow the IDF to operate freely in the security zone. So if all that is achieved are the understandings from Operation Accountability, then the IDF will definitely not be satisfied with what it has accomplished.

[Bekhor] You concluded your report with what sounded like an apparent contradiction. You said that the fighting would increase as we approached a cease-fire.

[Daniyel] That is correct. That is the assessment by the IDF's Northern Command. As soon as a deadline is determined for ceasing hostilities, Hizballah will step up its attacks to show that it was not broken and kept on fighting until the very end. Almost 50 or 60 katyusha rockets daily for the past 10 days are quite a lot for Hizballah, and Israel's northern settlements are continuing to absorb their attacks.

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Jordan: Lebanese Envoy Praises King's Stance on Israeli Assault

JN2004072896 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 20 Apr 96 pp 1, 3

[Report by P.V. Vivekanand]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Amman—Jordan's efforts to end the Israeli assault on Lebanon have a serious impact in Israel and the United States, and the Lebanese government hopes that the Kingdom's endeavors would contribute strongly to the quest for an end to the Jewish state's military campaign in South Lebanon, the Lebanese ambassador to Jordan said Friday [19 April].

Ambassador William Habib also said the Lebanese government highly appreciates Jordan's position and is aware that the Jordanian leadership is applying "quiet diplomacy" to put an end to the crisis sparked by the Israeli assault on Lebanon.

"Jordan, in view of its good relations with Israel and the United States, can play a very important role to make Israel understand that it had made a very bad choice by opting for military means to end Hizballah attacks," Mr. Habib told the JORDAN TIMES.

Speaking one day after His Majesty King Husayn received him and condemned the Israeli military campaign as "brutal aggression," Mr. Habib said the Lebanese government and people were "very thankful and appreciative" of the position adopted by the King, the government and the people of Jordan towards the developments in Lebanon.

The ambassador noted that the language that the King used in condemning the Israeli assault were "some of the strongest" used by any world leader in this context.

The King, in comments carried by the JORDAN NEWS AGENCY, PETRA, also described the Israeli assault as "criminal military operations against the innocent civilian population of Lebanon" and called for an immediate end to such actions.

"The King's words represent the public opinion in Jordan and reflect the sentiments Jordan and its people have for Lebanon," said Ambassador Habib.

PETRA quoted King Husayn as telling the ambassador on Thursday [18 April] that Jordan "also demands that the concerned parties resume dialogue and negotiations to find a settlement that would end the conflict and ensure Israel's withdrawal from the occupied Lebanese territories."

The King also warned of the danger inherent in the continuation of the aggression, which, he said, "threatens the whole peace process and could revive tension and further conflicts."

During the meeting, which was attended by Prime Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti, the King urged the international community to shoulder its responsibility and move speedily towards ending the "heinous Israeli aggression on the Lebanese people," PETRA said.

The King's meeting with Ambassador Habib came on the day Israel rocketed a U.N.-run refugee camp in South Lebanon and killed nearly 100 civilians who had sought shelter there after fleeing Israeli attacks on their villages.

Mr. Habib said King Husayn outlined to him Jordan's efforts at various levels to find an end to the Israeli assault on Lebanon and that the Lebanese government believed that "the opinions and words of King Husayn, who is very popular in Israel, the United States and Lebanon, will have a serious influence in public opinion in those countries" and thus help defuse the crisis in Lebanon.

"The Jordanian position has also put some other Arab countries in an awkward situation," said Mr. Habib, in an obvious reference to Arab states in the Maghreb and the Gulf which recently hosted Israeli leaders and moved towards setting up formal ties with the Jewish state.

The King, in his efforts to defuse the crisis in Lebanon, sent Mr. al-Kabariti to Israel on Tuesday [16 April] with messages to President Ezer Weizman and Prime Minister Shim'on Peres urging them to halt the assault on Lebanon and reengage in peace talks with Syria and Lebanon.

He was contacted with Lebanese President Ilyas al-Hirawi, Egyptian President Husni Mubarak and Saudi Crown Prince 'Abdullah, expressing concern and urging Arab efforts to put an end to the Israeli military campaign in Lebanon.

The King also met with the ambassadors in Jordan of major world powers and warned that the situation in Lebanon threatened the Arab-Israeli peace process and urged their governments to exert efforts for an end to the Israeli actions there.

Jordan has sent relief supplies to help victims of the Israeli assault on Lebanon.

Ambassador Habib said the Lebanese embassy in Amman had opened an account with the Jordan National Bank to receive donations to help the victims of the Israeli attacks.

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Mr. al-Kabariti, the first Arab prime minister to contact Lebanese Premier Rafiq al-Hariri to condemn the Israeli attack and reaffirm support for Lebanon, was also in touch with Lebanese Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz as well as the American and French ambassadors to Jordan Wesley Egan and Bernard Bajolet, whose countries are engaged in efforts to end the Israeli operations in Lebanon.

In his comments to the JORDAN TIMES on Friday [19 April], Ambassador Habib emphasised that there could not be a military solution to end the Lebanese resistance to Israel's occupation of a border strip in South Lebanon and called on the Jewish state to publicly declare an intention for phased withdrawal from Lebanese territories.

"Such a public declaration of a phased withdrawal would enable the Lebanese government to take over the areas evacuated by Israel and ensure security and stability there in a gradual manner," said the ambassador. "In such an event, there will be no justification of any armed group to be present in the area because the objective of armed groups there is to liberate the south Lebanese territory occupied by Israel."

Jordan: King, Saudi Crown Prince View Situation in Lebanon

JN1904204496 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 2000 GMT 19 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] A telephone conversation took place today between His Majesty King Husayn and His Highness Crown Prince 'Abdallah Bin-'Abd al-'Aziz, Saudi deputy prime minister, in which they exchanged views on the latest developments in the Lebanese arena. They stressed the importance of halting the military operations against the fraternal Lebanese people, returning to the logic of dialogue and negotiations to remove the causes of conflict, and resuming the peace process. They also discussed a range of regional issues of mutual concern.

Jordan: Prime Minister To Visit Cairo for Talks on Lebanon

JN2004204196 Amman Jordan Television Network in English 1900 GMT 20 Apr 96

[Announcer-read report from the "News at Ten" program]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] In Amman, Prime Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti will visit Egypt tomorrow to discuss the Israeli attacks on Lebanon. Information Minister Marwan al-Mu'ashshir told reporters after a cabinet meeting this evening that consultations with Egypt are under way. He said the Lebanese issue is a very important one, and he stressed on the need for a cease-fire in Lebanon.

In other remarks, Minister al-Mu'ashshir said a number of issues between Jordan and the Palestinian Authority [PA] were settled at today's meeting between the prime minister and a number of Palestinian officials.

Jordan: Al-Kabariti Discusses Ties to Quray', Mahmud 'Abbas

JN2004175596 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1500 GMT 20 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Prime Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti received at his office at the Prime Ministry today Ahmad Quray', speaker of the elected Palestinian Legislative Council, and Mahmud 'Abbas, chairman of the Higher Committee for Palestinian-Israeli Negotiations.

The talks focused on bilateral ties and ways to further enhance and promote them in the interest of the two fraternal peoples. Al-Kabariti and the two Palestinian officials also reviewed the latest regional developments, particularly the suffering of the Palestinian people in the autonomous areas due to the blockade and siege clamped on them by Israel.

In a statement after the meeting, Quray' said that the talks addressed the special and unique Jordanian-Palestinian relationship and the ways to remove any blemish that could hamper this relationship. He added that the talks also addressed other issues of common interest, including the meeting recently held between Palestinian National Authority President Yasir 'Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Shim'on Peres. The talks also addressed the Israeli-Palestinian agreement, vital parts of which, such as the redeployment in Hebron, have been suspended by Israel, Quray' noted. It is our hope that redeployment there would be completed within the next few weeks. We also discussed the closure and the economic deterioration in the self-rule areas caused by Israeli practices, Quray' concluded.

Jordan: Citizen Reportedly Shot Dead in Baghdad

JN2104121996 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 20 Apr 96 p 2

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Jordanian citizen 'Awni Yusuf Ahmad 'Awad, 52, was killed in Baghdad by three Iraqis who shot him three times and threw him from al-Taji Bridge. The killers took 'Awad's car, watch, ring, and 500 dinars.

According to the victim's nephew, Rashad, 'Awad is a taxi driver on the Amman-Baghdad-Damascus line. He left Amman for Baghdad on 27 March. He was absent

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for two weeks, during which nothing was known about him. 'Awad's son, Muhammad, went to Baghdad to look for his father, according to Rashad. Four days after he arrived, Muhammad called us to say that he found out his father had been killed, Rashad said. [passage omitted]

Rashad added that Muhammad went to al-Taji police station in Baghdad. An officer there told him that his father's body was found near the main road in al-Taji, where he was shot dead. The officer said that 'Awad was shot in the head three times.

Rashad continued: At the forensic center, officials refused to give the body to Muhammad until the police report, which says that 'Awad was shot and killed, is changed to state that the death was by natural causes and resulted from a fall, trauma, and bleeding.

Jordan: Iraqi Ambassador Summoned, Baghdad Envoy 'Recalled' Over Killings

JN2004171096 Amman PETRA-JNA in Arabic 1515 GMT 20 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Amman, 20 Apr (PETRA)—Prime Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti this morning summoned Iraqi Ambassador to Jordan Nuri al-Wayyis and asked him for clarifications regarding the recent killing of Jordanian citizens in Iraq.

The prime minister expressed his concern as well as the dissatisfaction of the Jordanian Government and people over these criminal incidents in which innocent Jordanian citizens were treacherously killed while they were performing their duty toward their fraternal Iraqi people. The prime minister underlined the government's keenness to protect the safety of its nationals everywhere. He asked the Iraqi Government to take the appropriate measures, to take to court those who caused the death of several Jordanian citizens in Iraq, and to mete out the most severe punishment against them.

In a statement to reporters after the meeting, al-Wayyis said: The prime minister summoned me to ask about the incidents that took place. I conveyed to him my government's concern over this issue. I confirm, once again, that our Jordanian brothers are being treated well in Iraq. Incidents happen everywhere.

In a related development, the Jordanian Government has recalled Jordanian Ambassador in Baghdad Bassam Qaqish for consultations on these criminal incidents, which have aggravated over the past few days, causing the death of several innocent Jordanian citizens and students.

Jordan: Iraqi Embassy Denies Killers Military Personnel

JN2104164296 Amman AL-HADATH in Arabic 22 Apr 96 p 3

[Unattributed report: "Killers of Jordanians Were a Gang Wearing Military Uniform; the Iraqi Embassy Denies Inviting Victims' Families to Kill Iraqis"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Iraqi Embassy sources in Amman denied that the killers of Jordanian citizens Muhammad Khayr Abu-Zayd, 'Izz-al-Din al-Duwayri, and Muhammad Salih 'Awadallah were members of the Iraqi Armed Forces or security services. The embassy sources indicated that the killers are members of a gang specialized in highway robbery and armed burglary, and that they were wearing military uniforms to fool motorists so that they would stop for them.

The sources said that the Iraqi security services detained all members of the gang, and that they will face trial to receive their just punishment as soon as the investigations are completed.

The sources denied that the embassy received any phone call from the relatives of the victims of the heinous crime. They also denied that Ambassador Isma'il Nuri al-Wayyis suggested to the callers to kill Iraqis residing in Amman to avenge their dead.

Sources of the Iraqi opposition in Amman indicated that the gang is in fact made up of military personnel from one of the Iraqi security services' checkpoints. The opposition sources also cited the Iraqi ambassador in Amman as telling the families of the victims that their children were charged in an honor case. However, this has been denied by the embassy sources. The opposition cited the Iraqi ambassador as telling the families of the victims: There are many Iraqis in Jordan; kill whoever you want of them to avenge your relatives.

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Lebanon: Fadlallah Rules Out Murder of 'Foreign' Nationals

TA1904191996 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1900 GMT 19 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Shaykh Fadlallah, the leader of Hizballah, has ruled out the possibility of murdering a foreign national in retaliation for the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] operation in Lebanon. Fadlallah said that such a murder contravenes Islamic principles and has no political justification.

Fadlallah was reacting to reports that a terrorist organization in the territories has abducted a U.S. citizen and intends to execute him tomorrow morning if Israel does not stop its attacks in the north.

Lebanon: Hizballah Objects to Execution of Ron Arad

NC1904165896 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1633 GMT 19 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Hizballah today declared its objection to the implementation of the death sentence against captive Israeli pilot Ron Arad, whom the Organization of the Oppressed threatened to execute within 48 hours.

Lebanon: Hizballah Denies Links With Organization of Oppressed

NC1904140896 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1345 GMT 19 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Beirut, 19 Apr (MENA) — Today, Hizballah denied having any links with an organization calling itself the Organization of the Oppressed that claimed it is holding Israeli pilot Ron Arad and that it will execute him in retaliation for the Israeli massacres in Lebanon.

In a statement it issued, Hizballah casted doubts about the existence of this organization or its claim about holding the Israeli pilot. It said: If this claim is true, then it would have been better for this organization to bargain for the release of the Israeli pilot in return for the Lebanese prisoners and detainees in Israeli prisons.

Hizballah has repeatedly denied that it is holding this pilot or that it knows anything about his whereabouts.

Ron Arad's plane was shot down in al-Biqa' in 1986 during the Israeli attacks on Lebanon. His fate has remained unknown due to the conditions that prevailed in Lebanon at that time.

Lebanon: Al-Hirawi Chairs Cabinet Meeting, Denounces Israel

NC1904151596 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1438 GMT 19 Apr 96

[Report by correspondent Yazbik Wahbah from the Presidential Palace in B'abda — live]

[FBIS Translated Text] The cabinet started its session at the Presidential Palace five minutes ago. President Ilyas al-Hirawi opened the session by calling on the ministers to stand in silence for two minutes in respect for the souls of the martyrs and victims and in denunciation of the killing of innocent civilian citizens.

In his speech at the start of the session, President al-Hirawi said: What Israel has perpetrated in Lebanon is a condemnation of conscience, civilization, international legitimacy, and human rights. Israel is destroying a homeland that has admiringly succeeded in overcoming the tribulations of the past 17 years and stood up to retrieve its right to its territories and sovereignty in the south and western al-Biqa' up to the international borders.

President al-Hirawi then asked: How logical is it for Israel to try to destroy what we have achieved in six years? How logical is it for the homeland's sky to be violated at all times and without respect for its sanctity? The enemy's ships are intruding into our territorial waters and even blockading the commercial ships entering our ports.

President al-Hirawi added: Lebanon is stronger than Israel's objectives. He said: My heart swelled with pride by the solidarity the Lebanese people and their collective stand against the Israeli aggressions. The united national stand and the spontaneous social solidarity have revealed the nobility of the Lebanese people that has always been this homeland's shield.

The president went on to say that Lebanon is not standing alone. He thanked the international moves to support Lebanon, particularly the efforts of friendly and fraternal countries. He praised the UN Interim Force in Lebanon and its sacrifices, noting that their blood mixed with the blood of the Lebanese in defense of Lebanon's sovereignty. He also expressed his and all the Lebanese people's deep condolences to the families of the three martyrs from the Fijian contingent and to the Fijian state, praising their sacrifices for Lebanon's independence and for the triumph of international legitimacy.

The president also appealed to all men of religion and the faithful to pray for the souls of the martyrs and victims in the churches and mosques.

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At the start of the session, the president briefed the cabinet on the current international contacts.

Lebanon: Cabinet Meets, Issues Statement on Attacks

NC1904170396 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1555 GMT 19 Apr 96

[Statement by Lebanese Information Minister Farid Makari following the cabinet session at the Presidential Palace in B'abda—live]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Council of Ministers held a session at the invitation of the prime minister. The president of the Republic attended and chaired the session.

The president opened the session by calling on the Council of Ministers to observe two minutes' silence out of respect for the souls of the martyrs and victims and to condemn the killing of innocent civilians. Then the president delivered the following speech:

What Israel has done in Lebanon is a denial of conscience, civilization, international legitimacy, and human rights. Israel is committing the crime of destroying a country that has overcome the crisis of the past 17 years in a way that is amazing, a country that has taken the stance of regaining its right over its land and its sovereignty in the south and western al-Biqa'. Israel does not like to see Lebanon recuperating and starting to rebuild. Israeli newspapers have not hesitated to reveal its flagrant objectives. They noted that the important strategic target behind Israel's operation goes beyond mere revenge. Israeli media added that the objective of the shelling is to display Israel's direct and harsh ability to destroy the efforts to rebuild Lebanon's economy. Israel, according to its media, does not like to see Lebanon, which used to be the Switzerland of the East, as anything but the garbage dump of the Middle East. So it proceeded to destroy the infrastructure, vital installations, and houses and villages and to render the villagers homeless and kill them; such was the extent of its actions that the effects of the attacks are as huge as the attacks themselves. What logic does Israel use for trying to destroy what we have achieved in six years? What logic justifies the violation of the airspace of a homeland at any time and without reservation? Gunboats are violating our territorial water and besieging the trade ships docking at our ports. What logic allows the massacre of Lebanese citizens before the eyes and ears of the world, by shelling them, expelling them from their homes, oppressing them, and humiliating them, while this world congregated in Sharm al-Shaykh to condemn the explosion of a bus carrying passengers in Israel? Lebanon is more powerful than Israel's objectives. My heart was lifted by the solid and united stances of the Lebanese people against the Israeli attacks. The united national stance and spontaneous popular solidarity have revealed the true Lebanese nationality that has always been the shield of this homeland. Lebanese internal solidarity has been the most convincing response, proving that the Lebanese deserve their homeland and that this homeland is more powerful than death.

We have always called for peace, but all Lebanon is against the criminal peace. All of Lebanon supports the just peace that is based on the implementation of the UN resolutions, foremost of them, Resolution 425. The crimes of the Israeli aggressions will not make us relinquish a single inch of our right and will not make us retreat from the determination to have the just and fair peace. This national unity we have displayed requires all Lebanese to be alert to Israel's exposed goals and not to squander the international support for our cause. It is our duty to be loyal to the responsibility of this unity. We are called upon to study every step we take and every action we embark on. What we are going through does not affect one region only, nor does it harm one particular group; our entire homeland is at a crossroads and the responsibility toward this homeland is everyone's responsibility. Lebanon is not alone.

His excellency the president expressed his appreciation of the international efforts toward Lebanon, particularly the efforts being made by the friendly and fraternal countries. He also said he appreciated the support voiced by friends and brothers. The president said the world is asked to demonstrate a clear stance. The reply to Israel's aggression against Lebanon lies in supporting Lebanon in imposing its sovereignty over the south and western al-Biqa' and in an international initiative to help Lebanon overcome the consequences of this catastrophe.

His excellency then praised the UN Interim Force in Lebanon and its sacrifices, adding that the blood of the UN soldiers mixed with that of the Lebanese people in defense of Lebanon's sovereignty. Here his excellency the president expressed condolences in the name of all the Lebanese to the families of the three martyrs from the Fijian contingent and to the Fijian State and praised their sacrifices for Lebanon's independence and the triumph of international legitimacy.

He appealed to all men of religion and the faithful to pray in the churches and mosques for the souls of the martyrs and victims.

His excellency the prime minister viewed the results of his contacts in fraternal and friendly countries, contacts that aimed at explaining the real objectives of the Israeli aggression against Lebanon, objectives that are different from the declared ones, because they concern the

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domestic situation inside Israel, the imminent elections, and the punishment of Lebanon for its stance on the issue of peace and its demand, together with Syria, for a just, comprehensive, and lasting peace.

His excellency the prime minister stressed that the Israeli officials' stances and statements have revealed the real premeditated intentions toward Lebanon, especially those concerning dealing a blow to the infrastructure by shelling the vital facilities, power plants, and the achievements made through the reconstruction process.

His excellency the prime minister then reported that he sensed support for the Lebanese stance during his tour, a stance that he said was expressed in the declared political stances and through the dispatch of urgent aid to Lebanon to help both the displaced and steadfast citizens.

The foreign minister then reviewed the atmosphere at the Arab League's emergency meeting held at Lebanon's request and the stances of support for Lebanon, which were expressed in the resolutions adopted by the League.

The minister also briefed the cabinet on the prevailing atmosphere at the United Nations in light of the Lebanese complaint to the Security Council against Israel. He said that Lebanon's permanent envoy to the United Nations is continuing his contacts with the fraternal and friendly countries in preparation for submitting a Lebanese draft resolution to the Security Council.

The cabinet then reviewed the declared initiatives to stop the Israeli aggression, especially the U.S. proposal and the French initiative, in light of the ongoing contacts between the concerned parties. The cabinet expressed hope that these ongoing endeavors to stop the aggression will achieve positive results, stressing the need for permanent solutions. The cabinet stressed that any solution must stem from Lebanon's firm stand of demanding Israel's withdrawal from the territories it is occupying and implementation of Resolution 425. It stressed the Lebanese security forces' ability to protect the international borders and achieve stability and security there.

At the information minister's suggestion, the cabinet agreed on temporary transmissions via satellites, through which all the television channels can participate to make Lebanon's voice and vision be seen and heard by the world and to broadcast news of the Israeli aggression.

The television channels in Lebanon will participate in this national media action. The cabinet decided to form a committee chaired by the information minister to draw up the mechanism for implementing, following up, and supervising this action.

The cabinet then decided to declare next Monday [22 April] a day of official mourning for the victims of the Israeli aggression and massacres. All official departments and establishments will be closed for that purpose. Thank you.

Lebanon: Buwayz—Cease-Fire Contacts May 'Bear Fruit'

NC1904135796 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1322 GMT 19 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz has welcomed the cease-fire calls made yesterday by Presidents Bill Clinton and Jacques Chirac. He added: So far, it is obvious that Israel is not heeding the calls and continues to bombard the coastal road near Sidon. Buwayz added: Until now, the contacts have revolved around U.S. and French initiatives. With Minister de Charette's staying in the region and the arrival of Secretary of State Warren Christopher, there is a possibility that the consultations may bear fruit in the coming hours.

Asked if contacts are under way with Hizballah to stop the firing, Buwayz said there are contacts between the government and Hizballah on the issue. We favor coordination and harmony between the resistance and the state, he added.

Lebanon: Birri Leaves for Damascus To Discuss Developments

NC1904182496 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1800 GMT 19 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Chamber of Deputies Speaker Nabih Birri has left for Damascus to discuss the latest developments with Syrian officials.

Lebanon: Hizballah Rejects U.S. Participation in Cease-Fire

NC2004104096 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1017 GMT 20 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] According to a report from Damascus, Hizballah Deputy Secretary General Shaykh Husayn Khalil, who participated in yesterday's meeting between the Hizballah delegation and Iranian Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati, has announced that Hizballah rejects U.S. participation in the international body proposed by the French and the Americans to oversee a cease-fire in Lebanon.

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He said: They [the Americans] are aggressors and are defending Israel. A committee from Syria, Iran, Russia, France, and Italy must be formed.

Lebanon: Hizballah Official Comments on Immediate Cease-Fire Conditions

NC2004112296 Paris AFP in English 1031 GMT 20 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tyre, Lebanon, April 20 (AFP) — A Hizballah MP on Saturday [20 April] said his group will "stop immediately" rocket attacks on northern Israel if it ended a 10-day onslaught of south Lebanon, as five foreign ministers were set to meet in Damascus.

"Let (Israeli Prime Minister Shim'on) Peres stop his aggression and the Katyusha rocket attacks will cease immediately," said Muhammad Funaysh, one of eight Hizballah deputies in the 128-seat parliament.

Any cease-fire "depends on an announcement by Israel that it will end its aggression on Lebanon and a pledge to respect the July 1993 accord," Funaysh told AFP during a visit to devastated regions in and around the southern port of Tyre.

In 1993 Israel and Hizballah struck a verbal agreement, brokered with the help of the United States and Syria, to put an end to a week-long Israeli blitz of south Lebanon that killed more than 100 people, most of them civilians.

Under the agreement Hizballah pledged to stop rocket attacks of northern Israel in exchange for an end to Israeli shelling of civilian communities in south Lebanon.

Funaysh reiterated "Hizballah's attachment to the right to resist to Israeli occupation" of a buffer strip in south Lebanon.

"This right cannot be negotiated or compromised," he said. US Secretary of State Warren Christopher was due to have five-way talks in Damascus later Saturday with foreign ministers Faruq al-Shara of Syria, Herve de Charette of France, Susanna Agnelli of Italy and Russia's Yevgeni Primakov.

They will discuss ways of securing a cease-fire in Lebanon, where more than 150 people most of them civilians have been killed in Israeli attacks since April 11.

Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati, whose country finances Hizballah, is also in Damascus where on Friday he met Hizballah chief Shaykh Hasan Nasrallah.

Lebanon: Buwayz Expects Agreement Based on 1993 Understanding 'Soon'

NC2004125196 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1225 GMT 20 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] French Ambassador Jean-Pierre La Fonda was noticeably active today. After visiting Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri, he asked for an urgent meeting with Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz to discuss a new proposal within the context of the French initiative, as Minister Buwayz has pointed out. Minister Buwayz stated that a solution will be worked out soon based on the principles of the July 1993 and with more guarantees. He shared Speaker Birri's views that the Lebanese state has nothing to do with the July understanding.

Buwayz expressed his belief that the French initiative involves better ideas than the U.S. initiative.

Lebanon: Buwayz Leaves al-Harawi Meeting To Meet French Ambassador

NC2004123496 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1156 GMT 20 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Three minutes ago, the men of the resistance fired a new salvo of Katyusha rockets in the direction of the Zionist enemy's settlements. Before that, Israeli warplanes raided the woods around the town of Mahrunah in Tyre Governorate and carried out two raids on the outskirts of Kafra. Now, we have just learned that four raids have taken place on Yatar and Kafra, three of which were on Wadi al-Dibb and the fourth on a location near the Nepalese contingent. Earlier, we cited AFP as reporting that the Nepalese contingent's location was directly hit, but the news agency did not report any casualties.

In another development, after meeting his Russian counterpart in the Syrian capital, Damascus, French Foreign Minister Herve de Charette announced that today and tomorrow will be decisive in setting a date for a cease-fire in south Lebanon.

We would also like to report that on the security level, a short while ago warplanes raided the town of al-Sultaniyah in three sorties.

In yet another development, the Lebanese foreign minister left B'abda Palace a few minutes ago after meeting with the president of the Republic. Minister Buwayz revealed that he received a telephone call from the French ambassador in Lebanon who asked for an urgent meeting with him. Perhaps there might be a new French proposal, according to suggestions by Minister Buwayz. Minister Buwayz has now gone to meet with the French

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ambassador to discuss the probable new proposal. Minister Buwayz also noted that French Foreign Minister Herve de Charette arrives in Beirut tomorrow, as does the Italian foreign minister.

Lebanon: Buwayz Describes Progress of Cease-Fire Negotiations

NC2004135296 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1313 GMT 20 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz has announced that the discussions taking place now will result in a cease-fire based on the various papers that are being discussed. He said that the basic principle is to provide for stopping the conflict on Lebanon's territory, preserve Lebanon's right to resist this occupation and provide the highest levels of security for its civilians.

At a news conference after his meeting with the French Ambassador Jean-Pierre La Fonda at the Foreign Ministry, Buwayz said that extensive negotiations have been taking place for the past two days. The objective of these negotiations is to establish a cease-fire. He noted that a cease-fire requires numerous factors, one of which is a mechanism, and this is being worked on currently in negotiations in which all parties are taking part. These efforts will result in a cease-fire based on these papers.

Buwayz noted that a supervision mechanism is still being discussed and elaborated. One of these is the right to protest when the agreement is violated.

He expects French Foreign Minister Herve de Charette to arrive in Beirut tomorrow. Minister Buwayz said 144 countries have agreed to hold a session of the UN General Assembly during which the Lebanese cause will be discussed. He said the meeting will be held on Tuesday [23 April]. In light of the developments that are taking place at the highest levels, Lebanon will have a stance on how to deal with this meeting.

Lebanon: Buwayz Cited on New French Plan

NC2004140296 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1325 GMT 20 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Following his meeting with the French ambassador, Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz announced that the ambassador handed him a plan from French Foreign Minister Herve de Charette that further develops the first French paper that was used as a basis along with the addition of some amendments.

Buwayz added: We will examine this plan that is based on good basic principles that might be acceptable after considering their potential consequences.

Buwayz pointed out that the French paper stems from the principle that Israel must refrain from attacking the Lebanese civilians in return for the resistance's refraining from attacking the Israeli citizens beyond the borders. A number of items will be added to this security principle, including how to observe [the implementation] of this understanding and how to apply it, Buwayz said.

Buwayz referred to intensive consultations that took place to reach a ceasefire that requires understanding and a certain mechanism that is currently being discussed. He added: With the ceasefire, there will be a mechanism for supervision and follow-up and a mechanism that receives complaints in case of violations. The structure of this mechanism is under consideration, he said.

He revealed that the Italian foreign minister will visit Beirut today.

Lebanon: Buwayz on French Draft Plan for Cease-Fire, UNGA Meeting

NC2004145396 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1320 GMT 20 Apr 96

[News Conference by Lebanese Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz with unidentified correspondents in Beirut on 20 April — recorded; broadcast in progress]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Buwayz]....It crystallizes the first French paper. This means that the first French paper was adopted as a base, with some amendments. He [French ambassador] handed me a draft, in this regard, that we will study. As I have said earlier, the French draft proposal stems from a good basis that could be acceptable, after careful study and examination of all the details.

[Correspondent] There was a clause in the French initiative that Lebanon wanted to amend. It relates to the right of resistance....

[Buwayz, interrupting] There are several clauses, without going into the details of this paper. I repeat that this paper stems from the premise that Israel will abstain from carrying out aggressions against Lebanese civilians, and in turn, the resistance will abstain from carrying out aggressions against Israeli citizens beyond the borders. This is the political or security principle in this process. Add to this a number of clauses that fall within the same category, including how to monitor or oversee this understanding, how to implement this understanding, etc. The idea is to confine the ongoing conflict and crisis within the occupied Lebanese territory and within Lebanon's right to resist this occupation

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and, in all cases, to provide the maximum degree of security to civilians.

[Correspondent] Did the French ambassador convey to you any initial time for a ceasefire tonight?

[Buwayz] Intensive consultations are under way. They started approximately two days ago, and they are heading for a cease-fire. A cease-fire requires several elements, including this so-called understanding as well as a certain mechanism. This mechanism is being worked out at the moment through various discussions among the French, the Americans, the Europeans, the Syrians, the Lebanese, and the Iranians. In the coming hours, God willing, all these efforts will have to result in a cease-fire based on certain foundations; namely, the papers and drafts being circulated.

[Correspondent] Will there be a committee overseeing this plan?

[Buwayz] There will be a mechanism for supervision.

[Correspondent] What is the makeup of this mechanism?

[Buwayz] There is a mechanism for supervision, the makeup of which is still being studied. There is a mechanism for supervision, follow-up, and receiving complaints in case of a breach of this understanding. This mechanism is yet to be finalized.

[Correspondent] Is [French Foreign Minister] de Charette coming to Lebanon tomorrow?

[Buwayz] This is what is expected.

[Correspondent] What about Lebanon's request for a UN General Assembly meeting [UNGA]?

[Buwayz] Nobody has approached the Foreign Ministry. Everyone wants to....[pauses] The Foreign Ministry knows what it has to do, and it is the one that made a decision and took action. Nobody should tell us what to do. These media shows in which everyone is calling on everyone else to do something are uncalled for. We seriously studied the question of resorting to the UNGA a few days ago. This idea is on the table. A date has been set for Tuesday [23 April] for a UNGA meeting with the approval of the majority of member states.

[Correspondent] So, there are 100 members more than the 162 already in favor?

[Buwayz] There are 144 member states that have agreed to hold a special meeting to discuss the Lebanese situation. Depending on the developments concerning the cease-fire and the political process, we will see at what level and by what manner we will handle this meeting.

[Correspondent] Could you tell us more about the draft resolution?

[Buwayz] What draft resolution?

[Correspondent] The one to be discussed by the UNGA?

[Buwayz] The UNGA meeting is not about a draft resolution. Lebanon will go to this meeting to present its case in detail. Then, the General Assembly will make a recommendation to the UN General Secretariat. This recommendation has a political and moral weight on the member states, the UN organizations, and naturally on the Security Council.

[Correspondent] Would you go to New York to present this case?

[Buwayz] It is possible. I said that Lebanon's level of representation, and the details in this regard are closely related to what we will reach between now and Tuesday. This issue may remain somewhat ambiguous until Tuesday.

[Correspondent] When will you give your answer to the French proposal that you just received from the French ambassador?

[Buwayz] The draft was conveyed precisely four minutes ago. Give us some time to discuss it. I need to read it. Thank you.

Lebanon: Statement Says al-Hirawi To Leave for New York 22 Apr

NC2004182396 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1800 GMT 20 Apr 96

[Statement by the Protocol Department at the Presidential Office in Beirut on 20 April — read by announcer]

[FBIS Translated Text] His Excellency President Ilyas al-Hirawi will leave for New York on Monday, 22 April, to deliver Lebanon's speech before the UN General Assembly, which will hold an extraordinary session on Tuesday, 23 April, to discuss the Israeli aggression on Lebanon.

Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz will accompany President al-Hirawi.

Lebanon: Russian Foreign Minister Arrives, Meets With Buwayz

NC2104080296 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0746 GMT 21 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] A short time ago, Russian Foreign Minister Yevgeniy Primakov arrived in Bustrus Palace [the Foreign Ministry], where he is now meeting with Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz. Buwayz will meet

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with Italian Foreign Minister Susanna Agnelli at noon today and with French Foreign Minister Herve de Charette in the afternoon.

Lebanon: Al-Hirawi Meets Russia's Primakov; Iran's Velayati Postpones Visit

NC2104090696 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0826 GMT 21 Apr 96

[Report by correspondent Yazbik Wahbah from the Presidential Palace in B'abda—live]

[FBIS Translated Text] Lebanon is the center of intense diplomatic activity today, the first of its kind in a long time. Four foreign ministers will be in Beirut today to discuss the situation in the south. Russian Foreign Minister Yevgeniy Primakov arrived at the Presidential Palace in B'abda after visiting the Foreign Ministry. He is expected to travel to Israel later to meet with senior Israeli officials. The Italian foreign minister, whose country is now chairing the European Union, arrived in Lebanon a short time ago. She will visit al-Sahil Hospital for a short tour and then move on to the Foreign Ministry and B'abda Palace to meet with officials.

French Foreign Minister Herve de Charette, who arrived at the headquarters of the UN Interim Force in Lebanon in al-Naqurah this morning, will meet Lebanese officials at the Presidential Palace in B'abda in the afternoon. Iranian Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati, who was expected in Lebanon this morning, postponed his visit until an unknown time. Now, President Ilyas al-Hirawi is meeting with the Russian foreign minister. Chamber of Deputies Speaker Nabih Birri, Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri, and Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz are attending the meeting.

Lebanon: France's de Charette Expects 'Decisive' Iran Contribution to Truce

LD2104091496 Paris France-2 Teletext in French 0843 GMT 21 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Foreign Minister Herve de Charette arrived in Beirut today. He went from there to Qana in southern Lebanon, where 98 civilians were killed by Israeli artillery on Thursday [18 April].

In an interview with JOURNAL DU DIMANCHE, Herve de Charette said that a cease-fire in Lebanon is "possible in the next few days."

After a meeting with Warren Christopher, Herve de Charette said: "Things are now moving very fast. We are expecting that Iran will contribute to the cease-fire in a decisive manner."

Lebanon: Russia's Primakov Makes Statement After Meeting al-Hirawi

NC2104110296 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1023 GMT 21 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] We now have on the line our correspondent at the Presidential Palace Yazbik Wahbah:

[Wahbah] Russian Foreign Minister Yevgeniy Primakov has said that his country is seeking a way out of the crisis in the region. He stressed that it is not permissible to bomb Lebanon's sovereign territory. He called for working out a way to stop developments in this regard. Without Lebanon, he said, the problem cannot be solved, because the issue concerns the firing at Israeli territory.

Primakov reiterated his commitment to the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 425. He said: We need temporary arrangements to stop the recent developments. Russia is in touch with all nations in order to come up with a balanced decision. No party should be given preference. Through such preferences, political problems may be solved. [sentence as heard]

President Ilyas al-Hirawi has been meeting with Italian Foreign Minister Susanna Agnelli, whose country is the current chairman of the European Union, since 1310 [1010 GMT]. French Foreign Minister Herve de Charette will arrive at the Presidential Palace just after 1500 to meet with Preident Ilyas al-Hirawi, Chamber of Deputies Speaker Nabih Birri, Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri, and Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz.

Lebanon: France's de Charette—'There Are Still 1 or 2 Problems To Solve'

LD2104113996 Paris France-2 Television Network in French 1100 GMT 21 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] French Foreign Minister Herve de Charette returned to Beirut this morning for a new day of contacts with the aim of obtaining a cease-fire. He went there before his Italian counterpart [Susanna Agnelli], who follows the negotiations on behalf of the EU. If he was forecasting a happy ending yesterday, Herve de Charette refuses now to give any forecast:

[Begin recording] [de Charette] There are still one or two problems to solve and everyone must assume his responsibilities fully.

[Unidentified correspondent] Do you still hope that a cease-fire will take place?

[De Charette] I hope that a cease-fire will materialize soon, but to say with accuracy when this will take place is still a little bit premature. [end recording]

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Lebanon: Italy's Agnelli Arrives, Calls For Immediate Truce

LD2104135896 Rome RAI Radio Uno Network in Italian 1100 GMT 21 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Weapons are still to the fore on the 11th consecutive day, and a truce still does not seem within reach. If Warren Christopher today favors Jerusalem, the Italian, French, and Russian foreign ministers arrived in Beirut. [Italian Foreign Minister] Susanna Agnelli on behalf of the European Union, insisted on an immediate truce and expressed her solidarity with the Lebanese civilian population. From Beirut, our correspondent Antonio Faitati reports:

[Faitati] Damascus, Jerusalem, Beirut — international diplomacy is playing its cards between these capitals in an attempt to resolve the crisis of the last few days as quickly as possible. Italian Foreign Minister Susanna Agnelli arrived here in the Lebanese capital this morning, as duty president of the European community. She will shortly meet the Lebanese president, with whom she will discuss, together with her French colleague, the proposals put forward by Washington and Paris. [passage omitted]

Lebanon: Italian Foreign Minister Meets Leaders; Buwayz Comments

NC2104115296 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1045 GMT 21 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Italian Foreign Minister Susanna Agnelli, whose country chairs the current session of the European Union [EU], arrived at the airport at 1100 [0800 GMT]. Health Minister Marwan Hamadah, whose is acting foreign minister, received the Italian minister with a number of the Italian embassy staff.

In a statement, Minister Agnelli said: I am here to voice the EU's solidarity with Lebanon. We believe that what happened in Qana was regrettable and unacceptable.

She pointed out that the EU has no plan. We hope to reach an immediate cease-fire and avoid a recurrence of what happened in Lebanon recently, she said.

Denying that any agreement has been reached, she pointed out that all the parties are creating obstacles, adding that she has come to Lebanon on a humanitarian mission because Italy has already sent relief aid. When a tragedy like that of Qana occurs, the EU feels sorry for the victims.

[Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic at 1112 GMT on 21 April adds the following: "The meeting at B'abda Palace between Lebanese President Ilyas al-Hirawi, Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri, Chamber of Deputies Speaker Nabih Birri, and Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz and Susanna Agnelli, the Italian foreign minister and EU chairman, has ended.

[After the meeting Buwayz said that His Excellency President al-Hirawi was told the EU's views on the current events in Lebanon. He said: We have taken notice of Europe's interest in reaching an immediate cease-fire based on refraining from attacking civilians. The cease-fire must guarantee the return of the displaced people to their villages and the withdrawal of the Israeli forces, which have advanced further into Lebanese territory during the latest operations."]

Lebanon: French Foreign Minister Visits al-Naqurah, Qana

NC2104115696 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1050 GMT 21 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] French Foreign Minister Herve de Charette, who arrived at 1115 [0815 GMT], boarded a UN military helicopter upon his arrival to al-Naqurah. From there, he headed for Qana, the scene of the horrible Israeli massacre.

In a statement, de Charette said: We are going through a very critical stage. I believe that we now have all the elements that might lead to a positive solution. We have to find a solution, he stressed, adding that everyone should concentrate on one or two points.

De Charette hoped a cease-fire agreement will be reached soon. He noted, however, that he cannot predict when this will happen because it is too early to tell.

Lebanon: Buwayz Remarks on Meeting With EU Chairman Agnelli

NC2104131196 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1200 GMT 21 Apr 96

[News conference by Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz with unidentified correspondents following a meeting with EU Chairman Susanna Agnelli in B'abda Palace on 21 April—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Buwayz] His excellency the president received Mrs. Agnelli in her capacity as European Union [EU] chairman in the presence of the speaker of the Chamber of Deputies [Nabih Birri], the prime minister, and the foreign minister.

His excellency was briefed by Mrs. Agnelli and the delegation accompanying her on the EU's views of events in Lebanon. We took note of Europe's interest in finding an immediate cease-fire in order to refrain from harming civilians. Moreover, the cease-fire must guarantee the return of the displaced persons to their homes and the withdrawal of the Israeli troops who have

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advanced further into Lebanese territory during recent operations.

We briefed Mrs. Agnelli and the accompanying delegation on the Lebanese position, which primarily and basically demands the implementation of Resolution 425, which is the right, practical, and effective mechanism to guarantee security and stability on both sides of the borders. If the immediate implementation of this resolution is difficult or if matters require a phased approach that prepares for this, Lebanon insists on an immediate cease-fire based on the principle of safeguarding, or rather keeping civilians out of the clashes and the military operations in the south.

[Correspondent] [question indistinct]

[Buwayz] If we want to sum up the European initiative and what it has achieved so far, we can say that the Europeans are aware of the scope of the calamity and the number of civilian victims. This is the primary consideration that drives the EU's move. The EU consulted with some parties in Damascus yesterday, and in Israel before that. It is now seeking to support any plan based primarily on ceasing fire, returning the displaced, and, until Resolution 425 is implemented, developing a mechanism that guarantees civilian security and keeps operations between the Israeli army and the national resistance within the borders of the occupied Lebanese territories.

[Correspondent] Does this mean that a solution depends on Secretary Christopher's return from Israel to Damascus?

[Buwayz] I believe that if the United States has a basic role in the matter, this role should not preclude other roles.

[Correspondent] Do you expect Secretary Christopher to come to Lebanon?

[Buwayz] As of this moment we have not been notified of Secretary Christopher's desire or plan to make such a visit. Thank you.

Lebanon: France's de Charette, Buwayz Comment After Meeting al-Hirawi

NC2104160496 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1530 GMT 21 Apr 96

[Report by Yazbik Wahbi from B'abda Palace]

[FBIS Translated Text] The long day of diplomacy at the B'abda Presidential Palace ended this evening. After the Russian foreign minister in the morning and the Italian foreign minister at noon, French Foreign Minister Herve de Charette visited B'abda Palace at 1650. He met with President Ilyas al-Hirawi in the presence of Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri, Chamber Speaker Nabih Birri, and Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz.

After the meeting that ended a short while ago, Minister de Charette pointed out that the French plan is based on Israel's full withdrawal, in line with UN Resolution 425, contemporaneously with the disarming of the militias. The plan provides for an immediate cease-fire, the return of the displaced persons to their villages, the renewal of the July 1993 understanding, and the Lebanese Army's assumption of security responsibility in the south.

In response to a question, Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz said: For us what is required is first a cease-fire, the withdrawal of the Israeli army that has entered recently, and the return of the evacuees to their villages on the basis of a temporary mechanism guaranteeing that the operations be confined to a framework that does not harm the security of civilians, until Resolution 425 is implemented. Buwayz added: The French plan put forward by Minister de Charette provides for a specific mechanism that includes a supervisory committee that guarantees compliance. He added: The duality of roles does not have any negative effect, and we do not see any reason why the French initiative cannot exist with another initiative at a later date.

Concluding, Buwayz said: The region is not exclusive to anybody, and we welcome any initiative that serves security and stability and nobody has the right to block it.

Minister de Charette left for Israel a short while ago to continue his tour.

Lebanon: France's de Charette Visits Qana, To Meet Peres This Evening

LD2104175296 Paris LCI Television in French 1630 GMT 21 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [Announcer] After 11 days of fighting in southern Lebanon, Israel has offered a truce before the conclusion of a longer-term agreement. [passage omitted]

Herve de Charette left Damascus today for Beirut, where he arrived mid-afternoon. In between, the French foreign minister visited Qana in southern Lebanon, where 98 civilians were killed on Thursday [18 April] in a raid by Tsahal [Israeli Defense Force] on a UNIFIL [UN Interim Force in Lebanon] camp. This report is from LCI's special correspondents, Gregoire Deniau and Emmanuel Saint-Paul.

[Saint-Paul] Herve de Charette's lightning visit to southern Lebanon is one of the symbols that makes up France's new Arab policy. His helicopter is about to

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cross the front line; lower down, the Israeli navy salutes his passing by silencing its guns. For the duration of the visit, Operation Grapes of Wrath is interrupted — almost the foretaste of a cease-fire.

Herve de Charette went to Qana, to pay homage to the victims of the UNIFIL camp and condemn the violence:

[Begin de Charette recording] One is moved when one sees this disaster, this sadness and these empty towns, these abandoned villages, these ruins, while Lebanon is in the process of, and I hope can carry on pursuing its work of reconstruction — a difficult, courageous, and formidable task that it has been undertaking for four years, and that one must allow this small, brave population to continue. [end recording]

[Saint-Paul] A gesture, words that win over the Lebanese and explain the revival of France's popularity:

[Begin de Charette recording] I think everyone is working in the same direction. The Americans are doing so too, I am doing so, France is doing so, and I think that is what is completely new: That France is present in this part of the world where it is awaited, it has been awaited for too long now. [end recording] [passage omitted]

[Announcer] I must add that the Israeli army has just ordered an inquiry into the Qana massacre.

Herve de Charette is expected in Tel Aviv this evening, where he will be received by the Israeli minister responsible for the peace process and by Shim'on Peres. [passage omitted]

Lebanon: U.S. Ambassador Confers With al-Hirawi, al-Hariri

NC2104182496 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1800 GMT 21 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] At 1845 today, U.S. Ambassador Richard Jones visited the B'abda Palace where he met with President Ilyas al-Hirawi and Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri. After the approximately one-hour meeting, the U.S. ambassador said: We held a meeting. It was good. I cannot say anything at the present time.

Asked about the Peres-Christopher meeting, the U.S. ambassador said: They held a news conference after their meeting. I cannot add anything to what they said. Asked about the U.S. stance on the French proposal, he said: I cannot add anything to what Secretary Christopher said at the news conference this afternoon. Asked about the possibility of an early cease-fire agreement, he said: I hope we will reach this in a very short time. All parties are working toward this. Secretary Christopher held two meetings with Peres today and returned this evening to Damascus for further talks. I hope a statement will be issued soon, but it is difficult for me to know what is happening in the talks abroad. I cannot comment on the negotiations taking place abroad.

Lebanon: Lebanese-Syrian Contacts Held To Discuss Israeli Proposal

NC2104213796 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 2115 GMT 21 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Lebanese President Ilyas al-Hirawi received U.S. Ambassador Richard Jones at the B'abda Palace last night in the presence of Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri. Jones described the meeting as good and hoped that a cease-fire would be reached very soon.

It has been learned that Ambassador Jones handed President al-Hirawi an Israeli proposal calling for a temporary truce, however, Lebanese officials fear that this proposal may be a trap because the truce may last long enough to serve Israel's interests until its legislative elections that are scheduled for the end of May.

A prominent Lebanese source has stated that during this period, nothing guarantees the return of approximately 300,000 people displaced from their villages in the south as a result of the raids and shelling.

High-level contacts were held between Lebanese and Syrian officials in the evening to discuss, in particular, the Israeli proposal to declare a truce before beginning negotiations to reach a security agreement.

Lebanon: Al-Hariri Against Partial Settlement of Lebanese Situation

NC2204063296 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0605 GMT 22 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri stressed that he does not want the negotiations for peace in Lebanon to be limited to a partial or short-term settlement.

In an interview with a British paper published today, al-Hariri said the Israeli occupation of south Lebanon remains the primary problem, and that if Israel is seeking security, it will find it in Resolution 425 which calls for Israel's withdrawal from Lebanon.

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Lebanon: President al-Hirawi Discusses Developments With U.S. Envoy

NC2204074896 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0738 GMT 22 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] President Ilyas al-Hirawi received U.S. Ambassador Richard Jones at 1015 [0715 GMT] today. They discussed developments.

Very soon President al-Hirawi will be leaving Beirut for New York, where he will address the UN General Assembly tomorrow, Tuesday [23 April].

Lebanon: Foreign Minister—'Large Part' of French Plan To Be Adopted

LD2204084696 Paris France-Inter Radio Network in French 0600 GMT 22 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Diplomatic competition is going at a brisk pace in the Middle East. The capitals of the region — Tel Aviv, Beirut, Damascus, and Cairo — have for a few days now seen a procession of French, Iranian, American, Italian, or Russian foreign ministers. [passage omitted]

Due to its diplomatic tradition, Israel favors the American moves; Lebanon, on the other hand, tends to trust France. Lebanese Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz thinks the Israeli Government will be obliged to accept a compromise. He said so in Beirut last night to Frederic Carbonne:

[Begin Buwayz recording] It is true: one gets the impression that the Americans protect their private hunting ground to a certain extent. One gets the impression that the Israelis help them to do so, by being negative with regard to any French or European initiative, as if to say that only American initiatives can succeed. But in the end, I think that up to a point, Peres is nevertheless caught up in the Lebanese quagmire. If he were asked what this whole very costly operation is leading to, I do not think he would be up to giving a convincing answer. That is why I do not rule out the possibility that in the end, despite the Israeli preference for what is known as the American initiative, a large part of the French initiative will be taken up, adopted, because it is accepted by several parties, because it is more probable. [end recording]

Lebanon: Al-Hirawi, Buwayz Leave for New York; Buwayz Comments

NC2204093696 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0905 GMT 22 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] President of the Republic Ilyas al-Hirawi has left Beirut for New York accompanied by Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz. The latter said at the airport that the objective of the visit is to present the massacres and catastrophes that are taking place, the political background behind events in Lebanon, and what Lebanon will ask from the international community.

Lebanon: Al-Hariri, Birri Leave for Damascus; Birri Rejects Truce

NC2204095696 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0937 GMT 22 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri and Chamber of Deputies Speaker Nabih Birri left for Damascus at 1215 [0915 GMT] today.

Before departing, Speaker Birri said: His Excellency Prime Minister al-Hariri and I are going to Damascus to meet Syrian leaders and officials. We hope for the best, God willing. We will talk about the results either there or upon our return.

In answer to a question, Speaker Birri said: I believe our visit is an important one.

In answer to another question, Speaker Birri said: Lebanon cannot agree to a truce because that does not allow 400,000 persons who have been displaced, dispersed, or butchered to return to their homes. The truce is a trap to which we cannot agree.

Lebanon: Prime Minister on Solution to Current Crisis

MS2204091796 London FINANCIAL TIMES in English 22 Apr 96 p 3

[Interview with Lebanese Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri by correspondent David Gardner in Beirut; date not given]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Mr Rafiq al-Hariri, Lebanon's embattled prime minister, wants more from negotiations to end the latest Middle East crisis than a halt to Israel's 11-day bombardment of his country. He wants Israel out of Lebanon altogether.

The country, struggling to rebuild its economy and its cohesion after the devastating civil warfare involving its 17 minority communities between 1975 and 1990, could no longer live with short-term and illusory solutions which keep turning the country into the region's battleground, Mr al-Hariri said in an interview at his Beirut home.

"This method of partial solution is wrong. Why don't we try to solve the problem?" he asked. "We end up having to live with these short-term solutions for 18 years."

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It is 18 years since Israel's first incursion into Lebanon in 1978. That was followed by a full invasion and the destruction of much of Moslem West Beirut in 1982, and Israel's subsequent creation of its "security zone" in southern Lebanon, occupying 12 per cent of the country's territory.

The 1982 invasion and Israel's pull-back by 1985 under heavy attrition from Shia Moslem militias led directly to the emergence of Hizballah, the Shia fundamentalist force fighting the Israeli occupation. Israel says its 1993 air blitz of south Lebanon and the current "Grapes of Wrath" operation are intended to smash Hizballah. It follows, in Mr al-Hariri's analysis, that "the problem" is, first of all, the occupation, and only then the resistance to it.

"If they are looking for security, it's right there," he said, in reference to the 1978 UN Security Council Resolution 425 requiring Israel to withdraw from Lebanon. Of Mr Shim'on Peres, Israel's prime minister, whom he has never met, he said: "He is in my country, and he is saying that he is defending himself.

"Enough is enough. Israel has to accept that it cannot keep launching air raids, destroying the country again and again as it has done for 18 years. The Israelis cannot be talking about peace and making war at the same time. They have to change their methods."

Israel "made a big mistake invading Lebanon" in 1982 and intervening in the country's tribal wars, he said. "They got used to playing the Lebanese game and got sucked into the quicksand," leaving south Lebanon as Israel's only active war front after five years of peace deals with its Arab neighbours. Mr Peres, he insisted repeatedly, was also making a "mistake" with the current assault.

What Mr al-Hariri clearly senses is the opportunity to push the issue of Israel's occupation of south Lebanon up the Middle East peace agenda. By shelling the UN refugee shelter in Qana last Thursday, killing 101 people, mostly women and children, "Israel committed a crime" and cannot be allowed "to get away with it," he said.

A US-Israeli plan linking a ceasefire to an end to Hizballah action against Israeli occupation appears to be giving way to a French-initiated plan to tighten up the 1993 US-brokered rules of engagement between Israel and Hizballah, where both sides agree to refrain from targeting civilians.

The circumstances are thus propitious for Lebanon's prime minister to highlight the Israeli occupation as the root cause of the conflict.

Neither Lebanon, nor Hizballah, the country's only civil war militia which has not been disarmed, is its own master. The civil war not only left Israel in possession of the south, but also left 35,000 Syrian troops controlling security in the rest of the country. Damascus arbitrates in Lebanon. Hizballah operates with Syrian backing, and with financing and inspiration from Iran.

For both countries the militia is a means of keeping up pressure on Israel, and by extension, the US. Under these circumstances, the proposition that an end to occupation will end resistance may be too simple, particularly for Israel.

Whether or not Mr al-Hariri can keep the Israeli occupation at the forefront of negotiations, he is articulating forcefully the one issue which unites all Lebanese, irrespective of sect, clan or religion — and this week as never before.

The billionaire construction tycoon has grown in stature in the past 10 days, using his wide range of international contacts artfully. He was scarcely known in Lebanon until he helped negotiate an end to the civil war, and then, as prime minister, came to embody the country's attempts to reconstruct.

Before this crisis, Mr al-Hariri believed the occupation, the resistance, and indeed the task of national reconciliation after the civil war, were beyond Lebanon's resolution, and concentrated on physical reconstruction. The notion that you could have the latter without the former was already unravelling before Israel's bombs started hitting Shia villages and infrastructure which had just been replaced.

However the negotiations turn out, Mr al-Hariri's challenge will be to solidify the country's cohesion, inspired by opposition to Israel, so that it underpins the reconstruction effort. How far has that effort been set back? "I can't tell you now," he said. "But the final answer will depend on the result of this negotiation."

Lebanon: Birri Meets Syria's al-Asad, Comments on Initiatives

NC1904205096 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 2015 GMT 19 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad has received Chamber of Deputies Speaker Nabih Birri in Damascus. The four-hour meeting was attended by Syrian Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam.

Afterward Speaker Birri said: The four hours of talks were confined to the Israeli aggression against Lebanon, its objectives, its destructive consequences, and the proposed initiatives, especially the French and the U.S.

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ones. It is clear that every time Israel launched a major attack on the south to violate and destroy it, it did so using a specific excuse. But it can be said this time that this is a criminal war and its real objective is to displace the inhabitants of the south and consequently return Lebanon to the intensive care unit to die and so complete the encirclement of Syria.

Birri added: Since 1972 and before Resolution 425 was issued, Israel has invaded Lebanon four times. This attack is the most criminal one. Any solution, even temporary, should be a firm one that ensures that there will be no attacks on civilians, villages, towns, and urban centers while simultaneously maintaining the legitimate right of resistance to liberate the occupied territories until Resolution 425 is implemented in all its clauses. It is within this framework and based on this premise that the proposed initiatives on temporary plans were discussed. Intensive contacts on several levels are under way to attain this objective.

Lebanon: Buwayz on Israeli Attack, U.S. Cease-Fire Plan

JN1904184696 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1532 GMT 19 Apr 96

[Telephone interview with Lebanese Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz, in Beirut, by unidentified correspondent in the studio on 19 April; from "The Week's Event" program—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Correspondent] In the wake of the appeals by Presidents Chirac and Clinton for a cease-fire and the U.S. and French diplomatic activity, when do you expect a cease-fire to be achieved? Do you expect the cease-fire to be simultaneous with a new understanding regarding the situation on the Lebanese-Israeli border?

[Buwayz] Despite the two appeals made yesterday by Presidents Clinton and Chirac, Israeli warships this morning shelled the coastal road between Beirut and the south. The Israeli forces also warned the residents of al-Nabatiyah city to evacuate. It is clear that these measures do not give the impression that Israel will heed these two appeals. Israel is sending clearly provocative messages. At any rate, we have welcomed these two appeals. There is a flurry of diplomatic activity. French Foreign Minister Herve de Charette is expected to visit Beirut tomorrow. Also, Italian Minister Agnelli is expected to visit Lebanon, in her capacity as president of the EU. Russian Foreign Minister Primakov will also visit Lebanon. We have received many contacts from a number of Arab foreign ministers. Dennis Ross, coordinator of U.S. affairs in the Middle East, is expected to arrive today. Also, Secretary Christopher is expected to arrive. I think there is an attempt to achieve a cease-fire and to consolidate it through a certain understanding on the situation.

[Correspondent] Mr. Minister: We notice that the U.S. cease-fire plan does not talk about Security Council Resolution 425 and other resolutions. Does this mean that the war currently launched by Israel seeks to drive Lebanon to endorse new agreements that push it outside the context of the peace process and deal with it and with Syria each on its own?

[Buwayz] Legally speaking, the fact that the U.S. initiative does not refer to Resolution 425 does not cancel this resolution. You know that this resolution was adopted by the Security Council, which is the only party that can cancel it by adopting the same legal method in which it was taken. Therefore, no country can cancel this resolution. Second, the United States did not refer to the resolution because its plan is a cease-fire initiative, not a comprehensive political initiative. This means that what is sought here is an immediate cease-fire and for this cease-fire to hold in the short and medium run. Therefore, the fact that Resolution 425 was not mentioned does not mean that this resolution is rejected. Yesterday, the Security Council adopted a resolution. We have reservations about this resolution and we think it is timid. However, this resolution referred to Resolution 425, and the United States was one of the states that endorsed it. Therefore, I do not think that this is the point at issue now. What is at issue here is taking immediate measures on the ground to achieve a cease-fire that could hold and stopping the Israeli attacks.

[Correspondent] Regarding the new plan of understanding, whether it is a U.S. or a joint U.S.-French plan, what is the maximum Lebanon can accept? Is the issue of disarming Hizballah or preventing it from using arms against Israel under discussion?

[Buwayz] In fact, these two initiatives do not provide for eliminating Lebanon's right to resist the Israeli occupation. They try to control the operations in southern Lebanon, so these operations will not go beyond their military aspect and will not target civilians.

The principle of whether to have or not to have resistance is not raised. Naturally, I cannot give further details as long as these things are still mere ideas and have not yet crystallized into an integrated plan.

[Correspondent] The Israeli war and the damage it has inflicted on various Lebanese areas and on the economic infrastructure have created a kind of solidarity and cohesion among the political parties and the various areas throughout Lebanon.

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[Buwayz] I believe that this catastrophe has first unified the Lebanese people and the Arabs. At the Arab League yesterday, we witnessed the first meeting of the Arab states since the Gulf war in which there was no controversy or inter-Arab disputes. The Arab states issued a resolution which embodied a unified, sincere, and cohesive position. This prompted us to say that the Arab League was in need of a catastrophe in Lebanon in order to circumvent its internal disputes.

This also applies to Lebanon. Peres managed to unify the Lebanese people against the background of the attacks and the disasters he caused. In Lebanon, there is actually a kind of internal cohesion and solidarity regarding the successive disasters which occurred in the past few days. Throughout the long years of the Lebanese war, however, Lebanon did not witness this cohesion and solidarity.

This is one of the actual results of the injustice done to the Lebanese people due to these attacks.

[Correspondent] Thus it can be asked: What has the Israeli prime minister achieved?

[Buwayz] I believe that Peres has achieved great victory in his race with the terrorist Israeli organizations Irgun and Stern. I also believe that Peres' actions have surpassed those of these two organizations. Peres also achieved another thing; namely, he exceeded the atrocities at the Nazi concentration camps of Treblinka and Auschwitz.

This is all that Peres has achieved. On the ground, however, he has not achieved any political or security gain. All the victims who have fallen are innocent civilians who have nothing to do with this war.

Peres has not managed to strike at the infrastructure of the resistance or kill any of the resistance fighters. Apart from Peres' descent into this abyss, which was inspired by some Israeli generals, and apart from the sabotage Peres carried out in Lebanon, we do not find that Israel has achieved any political or security gain whatsoever.

Lebanon: Birri—Agreement Must Protect Civilians, 'Resistance' Right

NC2004114796 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1053 GMT 20 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Chamber of Deputies Speaker Nabih Birri has stressed at the end of his meeting with President Ilyas al-Hirawi in B'abda Palace that Lebanon cannot enter any agreements that look like agreements between militias, which are prone to constant violations. The first principle in any agreement, he said, must be the protection of Lebanese civilians from Israeli aggression after their compensation for the massacres that have been perpetrated, especially over the past few days. He said any agreement must provide for the resistance's right to work for the liberation of the land until Security Council Resolution 425 is implemented.

Birri said: There must be a formula, different from any verbal agreement. It is the Lebanese Government, not just a certain party or side, that concludes agreements. He added: Israel has been engaged in continuous massacres in al-Nabatiyah since yesterday, and today it is trying to block food supplies from reaching the besieged southerners. He added: We no longer have a secure food supply, and regrettably there were no reserves. He said the Israeli plan is to oust the southerners, always using the pretense of resisting Hizballah. Because the Israelis have failed in the face of the steadfastness of the southerners, he said, they are trying to prevent food from reaching the south.

Birri went on: If their aim is to influence the current talks in Beirut and Damascus, we emphasize that the Lebanese are firm in their positions. He added: Despite all attempts and the current discussions, the Security Council resolution proved to be a product of fear. I picture the Council as a child who fears his own shadow. We want to turn to the UN General Assembly, and we stress the need for the government to take measures to seek a meeting of the Assembly.

Speaker Birri added: I would like to inform you that the Interparliamentary Union [IPU], after a Lebanese proposal, considered the Israeli aggression against Qana an act of international terrorism. I appeal to the IPU and to all Arab parliamentarians to support Lebanon at this difficult period.

Lebanon: Birri Expects Agreement 'Within 24 Hours'

NC2004115296 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1127 GMT 20 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Adding to the statement he made at the Republican Palace in which he spelled out Lebanon's stand on the Israeli aggressions and any proposed solution, Chamber of Deputies Speaker Nabih Birri has also said that an agreement will be reached within 24 hours, that this agreement will be concluded within the next 24 hours, and that Lebanon is in constant touch with all developments in the ongoing contacts in the Syrian capital and elsewhere. [sentence as heard] He said that he had read the details of the proposed agreements and studied them word by word.

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Lebanon: Israeli Assault Toll Reaches 159 Dead, 300 Wounded

NC2104113296 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1056 GMT 21 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Israeli Operation Grapes of Wrath has so far left 159 dead and more than 300 wounded, mostly civilians.

Lebanon: UN Official Arrives To Open Inquiry Into Qana Incident

NC2104150496 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1415 GMT 21 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The military adviser of the UN secretary general arrived in Qana today to conduct an urgent inquiry into the Qana massacre.

After making a tour of the headquarters of the Fijian contingent, the adviser said: UN Secretary General Dr. Butrus-Ghali has sent me to open an urgent inquiry. I was shocked by this horrifying scene. He pointed out that he would meet today with Israeli officials and leave Israel tomorrow to go back to New York.

Meanwhile, the Fijian interior minister today accused Israel of deliberately targeting the site of the peacekeeping force in Qana, where 98 civilians were killed, mostly women and children. He added: We were shocked by what had happened, which was totally unjustified and which I cannot consider as just a mistake.

Lebanon: Al-Hirawi To Attend UN Meeting on Lebanon

NC2004163696 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1623 GMT 20 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] AFP reported a short while ago that President Ilyas al-Hirawi will leave for New York to attend the UN General Assembly meeting on Tuesday [23 April] to discuss Israel's aggressive operations against Lebanon.

In another development, AFP has reported that a Lebanese soldier was killed and two others were seriously wounded today during the shelling of the region south of Tyre.

Lebanon: Buwayz—U.S. Peace Role Must Not Block Other Roles

NC2104152796 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1415 GMT 21 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz has stated that Israeli Prime Minister Shim'on Peres' criticism of the multiplicity of mediation efforts closes the door to serious initiatives.

Speaking in a joint news conference at B'abda Palace with the Italian foreign minister, Buwayz said that if the United States has a primary role to play in this process, this role must not block the other roles. He added that the European efforts are now focusing on backing any plan that seeks a cease-fire, the return of the displaced persons, and at least a mechanism that guarantees the security of civilians and confines military operations between the Israeli army and the resistance within the Lebanese occupied territories.

For her part, the Italian minister, whose country now chairs the EU, has stated that she was surprised by Peres' statement. She added: Peres has welcomed the EU's initiative when I met him two days ago.

Commenting on Peres' criticism of the multiple initiatives to reach a cease-fire in Lebanon, French Foreign Minister Herve de Charette said: All roads lead to Rome.

Speaking during an inspection tour of UN forces in Qana, de Charette pointed out that there are many opportunities to reach peace, and we are all working toward that end and to reach a cease-fire. I believe we have made progress, he added.

Lebanon: Hizballah Leader Claims People Behind Islamic Group

MS1904094696 London FINANCIAL TIMES in English 19 Apr 96 p 4

[Report on interview with Muhammad Efnech, Hizballah political strategist, by David Gardner in Beirut; date not given]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Beirut — Hizballah, the Shiah Moslem fundamentalist militia fighting Israel in south Lebanon, yesterday promised no let-up in its battle with Israel.

Speaking as Israeli gunners shelled a United Nations refugee shelter south-east of Tyre, killing more than 100 people and wounding another 100, a senior official in the pro-Iranian group said Hizballah would continue to resist the eight-day Israeli air and artillery bombardment.

Mr Mohammed Efnech, a leading Hizballah political strategist and MP [member of parliament], said: "We have more volunteers than we can accommodate. We have fighters. Our forces are intact."

In an interview in the Hizballah-dominated southern suburbs of Beirut — hit five times by Israeli raids in the first week of the conflict — Mr Efnech said: "This war will not achieve Israeli aims because the Lebanese people are united behind the resistance."

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But he held out the prospect of a return to the US-brokered 1993 understanding under which both sides refrained from targeting civilians. "The real short-term solution is to go back to the 1993 understanding," he said. But he added that Hizballah's fight would go on until Israel withdrew from all Lebanese territory, as required under UN Security Council resolution 425, passed after the first Israeli incursion of 1978.

"If Israel withdraws from Lebanon, Hizballah does not have the perspective of carrying on the fight against Israel," the Hizballah leader said.

Mr Efnech said Hizballah was inclined to the solution put forward by France, which is advocating stronger guarantees for a 1993-style understanding. But the US and Israel have so far been pushing a formula under which Hizballah would be disarmed. Mr Efnech said the arms of Hizballah were a question between Hizballah and the Lebanese government. "No one else has any say in the matter." But he added: "We do not have an a priori position that we will always have to keep our arms against Israel."

Hizballah has been raining inaccurate Katyusha rockets on northern Israeli villages during the Israeli onslaught, causing about 50 Israeli injuries. But Hizballah has only lost one guerrilla while more than 100 Lebanese civilians have now died in Israeli attacks. Israel has targeted south Lebanese villages and and infrastructs as far north as Beirut in an attempt to force the Lebanese government and its Syrian backers to rein in the Shiah militia.

Mr Efnech said Israel's proxy South Lebanese Army [SLA] militia in the occupied territory was disintegrating SLA defections are believed to have strengthened the quality of Hizballah intelligence, enabling its fighters to pinpoint senior Israeli officers inside the zone in recent months.

Hizballah, which emerged with Iranian backing and Syrian blessing after Israel's 1982 invasion of Lebanon, was best known in the 1980s for its devastating suicide bombings and kidnapping of foreigners. But, since the 1975-90 civil war in Lebanon ended, it has acquired wide cross-community legitimacy as a national resistance movement, with a deeply rooted political and welfare network throughout poor Shiah areas. It is the only civil war militia the Lebanese government has not disarmed and folded into its rebuilt, 53,000-strong national army, which has taken no part in the conflict.

Even before the waves of anger which coursed across Lebanon after yesterday's deaths, Hizballah supporters were successfully collecting donations from across the country's 17 minority communities, adding to about $60m a year it receives from Iran. Mr Efnech said Christians, sworn enemies of Hizballah during the civil war, were particularly conspicuous contributors.

Mr Fu'ad Sinyurah, the Lebanese finance minister, observed yesterday as his staff crowded round ministry televisions, that "there hasn't been a time in the modern history of Lebanon when the people are so united as they are today."

Lebanon: More Katyushas Fired at 'Occupied Territories'

NC1904152996 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1517 GMT 19 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Enemy warplanes have been raiding al-Qulaylah villages for some time. Resistance fighters have fired a new salvo of katyushas at the occupied territories. Meanwhile, the village of 'Aytit, in the Tyre district, is coming under Israeli artillery shelling. Enemy warplanes are flying over the region. We have just been informed that Majdal Zun is now coming under 155-mm concentrated artillery shelling from the Tayr Harfa-al-Jabban triangle.

Lebanon: Hizballah's Fadlallah on Mutual Cessation of Hostilities

NC1904154496 Paris AFP in English 1537 GMT 19 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Beirut, April 19 (AFP) — The spiritual leader of the Iranian-backed Hezbollah, Sheikh Muhammad Husayn Fadlallah, said Friday [19 April] the group would stop firing rockets at Israel if the Jewish state first halted its attacks in Lebanon.

Lebanon: Hizballah, Syria Want Israeli 'Guarantees' for Civilians

NC1904170096 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1650 GMT 19 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Today, Hizballah announced that it reached an understanding with Syria on the need to obtain Israeli guarantees to protect civilians in southern Lebanon and that they rejected any tampering with the resistance's legitimacy.

Lebanon: Hizballah Official Says Capabilities Remain 'as They Were'

JN1904170396 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1547 GMT 19 Apr 96

[Telephone interview with Shaykh Na'im Qasim, deputy secretary general of Hizballah, by unidentified corre-

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spondent; place and date not given; from "The Week's Event" program — recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Qasim] We announced, right from the first day, that the Israeli aggression against civilians in Lebanon will be responded to by firing katyusha rockets at settlers in the northern part of occupied Palestine. The Israelis started the aggression, therefore, they should immediately stop it. We believe that the July understanding, coupled with guarantees that the massacres and aggression will not reoccur, is the approach to resolve the current situation in Lebanon.

[Correspondent] This means that you stick to and abide by the July 1993 agreement?

[Qasim] It is the only valid agreement so far, along with real guarantees that will ensure the current situation will not be repeated. Israel should bear responsibility for what has happened.

[Correspondent] The war has been raging for nine days. There was an escalation yesterday, when Israeli troops carried out massacres in al-Nabatiyah and Qana. What is the extent of the human losses inflicted on Hizballah, noting that the aim of this war, according to Israel, is striking Hizballah bases?

[Qasim] Nothing of Israel's declared objective was realized. However, there are heavy losses among the civilians and their property. It was clear, through all the mass media, that the civilians were targeted in particular. As for Hizballah, three brothers were martyred over the past eight days. Therefore, we believe that the preparedness and capabilities of Hizballah in its confrontation of the aggression are the same as they were, and will remain so.

[Correspondent] The Organization of the Oppressed threatened it would kill the captive Israeli pilot Ron Arad. Do you not fear that such threats will deflect world public opinion from the massacres perpetrated by the Israeli troops?

[Qasim] We have nothing to do with this organization. We do not know anything about it. We should take care of our own responsibilities. I believe that the size of the aggression and what is going on in Lebanon will draw constant condemnation of Israeli terrorism. We do not know anything about what this organization says.

Lebanon: Nasrallah—'Jihad' To Continue Until Occupation Ends

NC2004160496 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1550 GMT 20 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Syrian Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' has conferred with Hizballah Secretary General Hasan Nasrallah, who also met with Iranian Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati in the presence of Hizballah Deputy Secretary General Haj Husayn Khalil.

After the meeting, Nasrallah stressed that the resistance fighters will continue their jihad until the occupation ends regardless of the sacrifices. They will continue to defend their people and kinfolk regardless of the results, he added.

Lebanon: Hizballah Official Views Israeli Campaign, Ties to Iran

NC2004184996 London MBC Television in Arabic 1800 GMT 20 Apr 96

[Report by 'Ali Nun in Beirut]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted] The Hizballah leadership that is meeting in Damascus and Beirut with Iranian officials over the accelerating developments continues to maintain its stance and refuses to turn the July 1993 verbal understanding, which calls for abstaining from bombarding civilians, into a written agreement.

Khidr Nur-al-Din, a Hizballah Political Council member, said:

[Begin Nur-al-Din recording] If the Israelis commit themselves to a ceasefire, we will immediately be prepared to comply with the July understanding, however, we emphasize that there must be more guarantees to deter this enemy from carrying out future aggressions. [end recording]

Hizballah also believes that the Israeli campaign has failed to achieve its results and that the Israeli leadership has miscalculated once again.

[Begin Nur-al-Din recording] He [not further specified] lost his political goals as a result of his failure to achieve any of the goals he set at the beginning of Operation Grapes of Wrath. He got stuck, particularly after the massacres. As a result, the Israeli entity, and Peres specifically, was compelled to look for a face-saving exit following this operation and military folly. [end recording]

Shaykh Nur-al-Din revealed an important issue concerning Hizballah's relationship with Iran and Iranian leader 'Ali Khamene'i's call to continue the fighting. He added:

[Begin Nur-al-Din recording] We have made it clear more than once and on several occasions and said to the whole world that Hizballah is a Lebanese party, with a Lebanese leadership, and Lebanese decisions. When it

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makes a decision, it takes the interests of Lebanon, not Iran, into consideration. [end recording]

Hizballah is dealing with the ongoing diplomatic and political efforts with clear openness on the condition that its resistance of the occupation remains untouched, so long as the occupation of south Lebanon continues.

Lebanon: Nasrallah Wants Guarantees Against Future Israeli Attacks

NC2004192996 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1908 GMT 20 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Hizballah Secretary General Hasan Nasrallah has stated that, in the wake of Israel's attacks, plans must be made to guarantee that the Israelis will not carry out any more aggression from now on, not only against civilians in Lebanon, but also against Lebanon's sky, sea, and land. He added that Beirut's southern suburb must enjoy real guarantees so that the aggressions may not recur.

Lebanon: Hizballah Denies Threatening Foreign Nationals

NC2204080996 Beirut AL-ANWAR in Arabic 20 Apr 96 p 5

[FBIS Translated Text] Hizballah has issued a statement denying making any threats against Western nationals, as attributed to it in some media reports.

In response to some media reports about threats to Western nationals attributed to Hizballah, a responsible source said the following:

"There have been false reports of threats by Hizballah. The aim of these reports is to divert world attention from the terrible scope of the crimes being perpetrated by the cowardly Israelis against the Lebanese people. Israel's effort is now focused on trying to draw attention away from the scenes of dismembered and butchered children buried under the rubble so as to cover up the truth about Zionist terrorism with a smokescreen of false rumors. This aims to confuse world public opinion.

"The whole world should learn the facts about the criminal Israeli aggression against Lebanon. Those who want to cover up the atrocities committed against civilians, especially children, are behind these rumors.

"Hizballah calls on all the media to check with its central information unit before publishing any report about Hizballah's stands in order to foil the Zionist attempts to divert media focus from the massacres perpetrated by the aggressor Israeli army."

Lebanon: Fadlallah on Israel's Informers, Against Harming Foreigners

NC2204090996 Beirut AL-ANWAR in Arabic 20 Apr 96 p 7

[FBIS Translated Text] In the Friday sermon he delivered yesterday, 'Allamah Muhammad Husayn Fadlallah revealed that there are Israeli informers in the Southern Suburb, Jabal 'Amil, and western al-Biqa' who have pinpointed targets for Israel to attack. He called on the citizens to help expose them. He also stressed that we will continue to confront aggression "because no one can guarantee a cease-fire. Israel is lying and using two languages—the language of barbarity when it defines its objectives and the language of peace when it addresses the world."

He said: "The United States does not want the European initiative to succeed. It is possible this war was launched to punish the Lebanese Government and people for receiving French President Jacques Chirac."

He warned that there are enemy informers in the Lebanese areas—specifically in the Southern Suburb, Jabal 'Amil, and the western al-Biqa'—and called on citizens not to shelter these informers but to expose them because Israel would not be able to bomb a certain house or area without them.

On the Qana massacre, Fadlallah said: "With this unprecedented massacre, we see the Jews surpassing the Nazis in their hatred by killing killed children, women, and babies in cold blood in Qana and al-Nabatiyah. I feel such deep sorrow I cannot find words to describe these crimes in Qana, al-Nabatiyah, and elsewhere. The Qana and al-Nabatiyah massacres have all the elements of the Karbala' massacre [the killing of the Prophet Muhammad's grandson]. Faced with this, we say that we will not falter. We will remain vigorous and continue the resistance."

He added: We must salute Christian-Muslim solidarity against Israel and the support for the resistance. We tell everyone that the mujahidin have no quarrel or anything to do with any foreigner, whether American or European. If there is any talk about kidnapping these foreigners, then we stress that these are rumors spread by Israel to divert the world's attention from its presence in Lebanon. The aim is to harm the reputation of the mujahidin. Therefore, we say: There is no reason to harass any foreigner. Our goal is to get the occupier out of Lebanon. There will be no peace between us and the Jews who have killed our children in Qana and al-Nabatiyah. The peace they are talking about is the peace of beasts and arrogance.

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Lebanon: Hizballah Spokesman on 'Israeli-U.S. Aggression'

BR2204110196 Rome LA REPUBBLICA in Italian 21 Apr 96 p 13

[Interview with Hizballah Political Council member Khadr Nur-al-Din by Alberto Stabile in Beirut; date not given: "We Will Respond to Massacres" — first two paragraphs are LA REPUBBLICA introduction]

[FBIS Translated Text] Beirut — The only way to achieve a truce between Hizballah and Israel is to return to the July 1993 agreements. But even if this prospect were to materialize, the Islamic guerrillas reserve the right to respond, whenever and however they consider fit, to the massacres of Lebanese civilians perpetrated by the Israeli army in Qana and al-Nabatiyah, and to the bloodthirsty incursions into the suburbs of Beirut. "This, not out of any spirit of revenge, but because it is necessary somehow to halt the aggressiveness of the Zionist entity," we were told by Shaykh Khadr Nur-al-Din, member of the Political Council of God's Party.

Our meeting with the senior Hizballah official took place in one of the movement's offices in a southern neighborhood of Beirut, the traditional stronghold of Lebanese Shiites.

[Stabile] International diplomacy is currently working hard to reach a truce. Are you ready to accept a cease-fire? If so, on what conditions?

[Nur-al-Din] We are prepared to accept any proposal that halts Israeli aggression and preserves our right to resist the occupation of our land. We are not the aggressors. The aggressors are the Israelis. It is they who attacked our country from the south as far as Beirut. They have violated 300 times the agreement that has been in force since July 1993. As far as we are concerned, it is enough to return to that agreement: It embodies everything; no further conditions are needed.

[Stabile] Will the Hizballah avenge the civilian victims of recent days?

[Nur-al-Din] We cannot endure the spectacle of hundreds of innocents killed like slaughtered lambs. It is Israel that has linked the attacks on Qiryat Shemona and Beirut, which we do not consider equivalent. We cannot depend on international organizations such as the United Nations or on any other country, and especially not the United States. We must depend solely on ourselves. And we know that Israel will not halt its aggression until it finds someone capable of stopping it. For this reason, even though our proposal is to return to the July 1993 agreements, we reserve the right to respond to the al-Nabatiyah and Qana massacres, and also to the deaths of civilians killed in air raids on Beirut. And we want this not as a vendetta but in order to prevent Israel from continuing these massacres.

[Stabile] But is your strategic objective to halt the Israeli occupation of southern Lebanon or to destroy Israel?

[Nur-al-Din] Our most immediate concern is to halt the aggression and to continue the resistance to liberate our country. From time to time some spokesman for our movement or other Islamic movements says that our long-term aim is Israel's destruction. Everyone is entitled to say how he sees the future. We Hizballah acknowledge everyone's right to exist, but we also recognize the Palestinians' right to return to their own land and to have their own homeland. If the returnee Palestinians do not mind coexisting with the Israelis we could reconsider our position. But I want to add this: We are always being asked to guarantee Israel's security, whereas our own security is not guaranteed. But this is not the problem. The problem is an ideological one, and it has its roots in the Talmud. It is they who regard us with hatred.

[Stabile] Israeli Prime Minister Shim'on Peres said yesterday that there is coordination between Hizballah and Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement]. Is this true?

[Nur-al-Din] Hamas is an Islamic movement in Palestine. Hizballah is an Islamic movement in Lebanon. And since they are both Islamic movements, every action carried out by one serves the other's cause too. But this does not mean that there is any operational or organizational cooperation. Each has its own identity, its own aims, its own leaders. There are no links.

[Stabile] Diplomats are currently busy in Damascus seeking a solution. One potential agreement depends on disarming the Hizballah. Do you fear such a possibility?

[Nur-al-Din] We are not worried about this. Since the stance recently expressed by the Lebanese Government on more than one occasion is that, as long as the occupation of Lebanon continues, there will be resistance. This is right and in accordance with all international laws. It is inconceivable that the Lebanese Government could seek to halt the resistance, thus serving the interests of those who are threatening it. It would be ridiculous.

[Stabile] What is your response to the U.S. proposal?

[Nur-al-Din] The so-called U.S. proposal is not the White House's proposal. Judging from the way in which it has been presented in the media, it seems more like an Israeli operation.

[Stabile] In view of what has happened hitherto, who has lost more in these first 10 days of the campaign?

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[Nur-al-Din] The Israeli-U.S. aggression has given us an opportunity that would have cost us billions of dollars to buy: It has created national unity; it has won us the West's sympathy; it has won us the support of the Arab and Islamic world... What else is there to add?

Lebanon: Al-Hariri Interviewed on Situation

NC1904181696 London MBC Television in Arabic 1705 GMT 19 Apr 96

[Interview with Lebanese Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri, in Beirut, by MBC anchorman Nidal Qabalan in London and Voice of America reporter Muhammad al-Shinnawi in Washington, including phone-in questions from viewers; from the "Dialogue with the West" program—live]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted] [Qabalan] Mr. Prime Minister, you have just come from an emergency meeting held by the Lebanese cabinet to discuss the latest developments in Lebanon. Can you tell this program about the most important issues discussed?

[Al-Hariri] Today, the cabinet discussed the current issues, primarily the civilians killed yesterday and the Israeli blows from the air. All Lebanese people were undoubtedly pained and grieved by the killing of civilians, children, old people, and unarmed people. It has become irrefutably clear that Israel's objective is to hit, frighten, and terrorize the Lebanese people and not to protect its northern borders. The Israelis are saying that they are defending themselves. Such a claim is acceptable if they were sitting in their country, but they are occupying part of our country, hitting our people, and displacing them. [passage omitted]

We are hearing calls for a cease-fire. We support a cease-fire and a halt to all the military operations, but there is a very fundamental principle that I will talk about very frankly. Israel yesterday killed more than 100 persons. What sanctions could be imposed on it for this killing, this vile crime? It acts like a pampered child. It says: Alright, sorry we killed. Now let us see how to protect ourself.

A second matter is the destruction. Who will pay the price? Who will pay compensation for those killed or rendered handicapped? These are serious issues. Israel must not be allowed to have a free hand to kill people, destroy buildings, and ruin the economy and then say: Let us sit down and see what we can do. The cabinet discussed this today. It is also being discussed with the concerned parties. [passage omitted]

[Qabalan] Mr. Prime Minister, we know that you have engagements and that, unfortunately, you will not stay with us until the end of the program. So, we will focus on you, amongst the program's guests, during the first half of the program. Could you inform us of the latest developments following your meeting with De Charette, how far have the diplomatic endeavors gone, and what are the results of your contacts with Hizballah fighters?

[Al-Hariri] After yesterday's tragedy there was an immediate response by his excellency, French President Chirac, who informed us that immediately after the heinous crime, he contacted the Israeli prime minister and asked him to cease the military operations and comply with the UN resolutions. He called us and informed us of this. Then we heard the U.S. President's call for a cease-fire. Secretary Christopher contacted me. All officials are contacting us to find a solution. We contacted Hizballah via the existing channels, and this matter is being discussed with all its details. However, a cease-fire, as Mr. Jihad has mentioned, is a complicated process, particularly knowing that the firing is not carried out by a state, but by armed groups who are in a state of war. Accordingly, contact among them is not as easy as some people expect. Meanwhile, we are speaking with the countries concerned, particularly with the French and the Americans, to see what sanctions could be imposed on Israel and what compensations the Lebanese people could get for this flagrant and outright aggression. As you know, we have said from the first day the operations started that if these operations aim to strike at Hizballah, they will not be able to strike at Hizballah. They will definitely not be able to strike at it, and we speak from experience. We even said more than that. We said that if you believe that Hizballah is a problem, I do not want to discuss what Hizballah's links are, its status, contacts, operations, or political inclinations. I do not want to get into all that. If you believe Hizballah is a problem, the current method used to obtain a solution will strengthen Hizballah, destroy the villages and homes, and murder Lebanese civilians without reaching any results. After eight days of military operations, what is the result? The result is that civilians were killed, citizens were displaced, homes were hit, we have 400,000 displaced people, dozens of civilian women, children, and elderly people were killed, and Hizballah remains intact and untouched. Are these the results of the Israeli campaign? We have said this from the beginning, but they were adamant and would not listen. What are the sanctions and the compensation? This is something that must be addressed. [passage omitted]

[Al-Shinnawi] Prime Minister al-Hariri. You said yesterday that if Israeli Prime Minister Peres wants a peaceful solution then you are ready. Deputy Israeli Foreign Minister Yosi Beilin told us that Israel will stop firing once Hizballah stops its attacks, but Hizballah did not

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respond to your appeal yesterday. How do you break this cycle? Is it necessary to rely on Syria to use its influence with Hizballah?

[Al-Hariri] Undoubtedly, Syria has a role, and it is ready to play it. This is known and essential. We have a role and are ready to play it; but I say that Israel's quick acceptance of a cease-fire, after having refused to heed the cease-fire calls from all over the world, means that it is now trying to avoid the sanctions and compensations. This is useless. The Israeli leaders must know that there is a price for attacking a peaceful country, part of whose territories they are occupying and where they are continuing to destroy it. There is a political, media, and a finance price to be paid, and the Israeli people that are backing this government must bear the huge compensations. Such a thing cannot pass just like that. Lebanon has not attacked anyone. Daily, some are thinking of waging war on us to destroy our houses and displace our children and women and then they say: Let us sit down and find a solution. We are not [words indistinct]. [passage omitted]

['Imad from Sweden] Greetings to the prime minister. I have two questions for you. The first is this: Why is Syria standing idle while our kinsmen and brothers are being killed in the south, Beirut, and al-Biqa' and when we know that Lebanon has signed a joint defense agreement with Syria? The second question is: Why has the al-Ta'if accord that calls for the Syrians' withdrawal from Lebanon, not been implemented in full?

[Al-Hariri] What Brother 'Imad is demanding is an Arab-Israeli war, a war between Lebanon and Syria on one side and Israel on the other. I believe that this is exactly what Israel is hoping for. We are saying that our country is striving for peace, and we are blaming Israel because it is carrying out these limited military operations at a time when it is talking about peace. If we escalate the military situation and involve the Lebanese and Syrian armies, then we would be acting contrary to what we believe in. We are saying all the time that violence does not solve this problem, but it can be solved through diplomacy and politics. Let us sit at the table and talk and see what are the differences between us. Friends can also play the role of the honest broker to solve the problems. This is how we can reach a solution. We said we were ready. We went to Washington and sat with the Israelis. The Lebanese delegation held 11 rounds of talks with the Israeli delegation in the presence of the Americans in order to reach an agreement on implementing Resolution 425. We are telling them: Implement Resolution 425. They tell us: No. Disarm Hizballah because it is harassing us in the occupied areas. They want us to disarm and fight Hizballah so that they will not be harassed in the occupied areas and can bring in tourists and show them around how they are developing agriculture and building settlements, as if the Lebanese people are ignorant of its interests or as if it has no political experience and awareness of what is happening in the world.

We all support talks about implementation of the al-Ta'if accord. You now live in Sweden and I wish you would come and live with us here so that you can see the positive role played by the Syrian Army in maintaining security and law and order in the country. No one dared to land at Beirut Airport some years ago but today the country is under control, and there is security despite all the incidents and the eight days of constant bombardment of Beirut and its southern areas, despite the presence of 400,000 displaced living in the streets, schools, and friends' houses, despite the killing of women, children, and old people, and despite the bodies of those killed by the Israeli warplanes and military machine. The economic situation is under control, and the monetary situation has not been affected despite the military operations. We still have great hopes in God Almighty and our country's future. We are not ready to sacrifice all these things in return for....

[Al-Shinnawi] [passage omitted]

[Qabalan] Mr. Prime Minister, since you are still with us, what is the role expected from Iran in resolving the ongoing conflict? We know that Iranian Assistant Foreign Minister Khonsari is shuttling between Damascus and Beirut for a mediation effort. Are there any results from this endeavor?

[Al-Hariri] Actually, I could not meet with Assistant Foreign Minister Khonsari because I was out of the country, and it seems he has left. So, we do not know what role the Iranian brothers could play, however, I believe that the main role is that played by the brothers in Syria on one hand and the Lebanese Government on the other.

[Al-Shinnawi] Mr. al-Hariri: How do you expect this wide-scale Israeli military operation will affect the peace process, particularly since the negotiations on the Syrian and Lebanese tracks were faltering in the first place?

[Al-Hariri] Undoubtedly, it will have a very bad effect on the peace process. It is our habit to be frank with the people and not to hide things from them. Today, the Israeli prime minister is saying that despite what is happening, we believe in peace and will continue the peace process. As an official in this country, how could I say to the Lebanese that in a few months time we will make peace with Israel? We have 400,000 people displaced in schools, 150 or 160 dead, 300 wounded,

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and hundreds of destroyed villages. How could I tell them I want to make peace? Does this make sense? Despite all this, we believe in peace, want it, and will do what we can, however, there is no doubt that the Israeli practices in recent time — and even before that and since Israel's establishment — involve a challenge for the Arabs. To us, peace is a strategic option, and we deeply believe in peace. This is why we always say that problems cannot be solved by force. This is why we say that problems must to be resolved by diplomatic means. As to the effect of the peace process, definitely, it will be very bad. If things continue the way they are now, I believe that it will be very difficult to find any Arab leader or official capable of continuing. Even the Arab states that signed [peace agreements] with Israel and the Arab states that started to establish certain relations at certain levels with Israel, these states are now revising their plans because they see that their people cannot accept Israel's conduct toward Lebanon and the Lebanese people.

[Qabalan] Mr. Prime Minister, our time booked on the satellite from Beirut is about to end. In 30 seconds, please, could you, on behalf of the Lebanese Government, state four or five main conditions for accepting any cease-fire plan?

[Al-Hariri] We will not make these conditions over the television, but in principle we support a cease-fire. We are in the process of consultations with the countries concerned to discuss the measures that ensure that the abominable crime that took place would not recur and see the sanctions to be imposed on Lebanon and the compensations to be paid. At any rate, as I told you these are issues being discussed with the countries concerned with the matter.

[Qabalan] We thank you for your participation in the Dialogue With the West Program, and we hope that these aggressions and this violence, which as you mentioned will not resolve this problem, will stop, and we hope the problem will be resolved soon. [passage omitted]

Lebanon: SLA's Lahd Submits Proposal on Withdrawal of Foreign Forces

TA2104143496 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 21 Apr 96 p A5

[Report by Eytan Rabin]

[FBIS Translated Text] SLA [South Lebanese Army] Commander Antoine Lahd is in favor of implementing Security Council Resolution 425, which calls for the withdrawal of all foreign forces from Lebanese territory. Until now, General Lahd has firmly rejected any solution that would include a withdrawal of IDF [Israel Defense Forces] troops from south Lebanon. Now, in the wake of Operation Grapes of Wrath, Lahd has informed Uri Lubrani, the coordinator of government activities in Lebanon, of his opinion on this issue.

Lahd's proposal to Lubrani has several points. The proposal implies that for the first time, Gen. Lahd has realized that an Israeli withdrawal from south Lebanon is inevitable. Until now, both he and his men have vehemently rejected such a possibility.

In his proposal, Lahd calls for a test period of several months during which all foreign forces would withdraw from Lebanon, as stipulated by Resolution 425. In the course of this interim period, international forces would be deployed in Lebanon. At the next stage, all Lebanese territory would be placed under the control of the Lebanese Army.

A defense establishment source explained that this is the first time since Operation Grapes of Wrath began that Gen. Lahd has addressed the possibility of an IDF withdrawal. His proposal also calls for a Syrian withdrawal.

A defense establishment source told HA'ARETZ that although the SLA is a small military force, the SLA commander has become a symbol in south Lebanon. He therefore possesses a significance beyond his military power, and his opinion carries weight.

On the eve of Operation Grapes of Wrath, morale was very low among SLA troops who were fearful with regard to the organization's future after Syria and Israel sign a peace agreement.

Shim'on Peres, prime minister and defense minister, was aware of the low morale in the SLA and made efforts to improve the situation. Peres met Lahd and promised him that within the framework of an agreement with Syria and Lebanon, Israel would guarantee the safety and well-being of SLA personnel and the Lebanese residents of the security zone. The SLA is extremely concerned about the future of the area after an arrangement is reached.

In addition, it has been learned that a senior SLA commander, who worked for the organization's security apparatus, resigned several weeks ago. The man was forced to leave against the background of disagreements with Gen. Lahd. Senior Israeli officials tried to mediate between the two men, but eventually it was decided that the man would retire from the SLA and leave the area.

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Lebanon: Security Situation in South Updated

NC2104072796 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0700 GMT 21 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Israeli bombardment of Majdal Silm, Khirbat Silm, Qallawiyah, and Burj Qallawiyah is continuing. Some shells fell near the Finnish contingent positions in Burj Qallawiyah.

The UN Interim Force in Lebanon is distributing the food rations given by the Higher Relief Committee in Tulin and Tibnin.

Bombardment of the outskirts of Dayr Kifa and Srifa is also continuing. The coastal road to the south, specifically in the 'Adlun, Khayzaran, and al-Sarafand areas, is still being bombarded by the enemy's warships.

At 0900 [0600 GMT] today, Qallawiyah, Burj Qallawiyah, Srifa, and the road between Qallawiyah and Dayr Kifa came under 155-mm artillery bombardment from the occupation forces position in Tallat Mahsru' al-Tayyibah and al-Qantarah.

Our correspondent also reports that two Israeli warships off al-Saksakiyah are attempting to cut the road from there to the frontline villages in the south by shelling it. Fifteen shells have fallen on this road so far.

Lebanon: Beirut Radio Updates Security Situation

NC2204055696 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0430 GMT 22 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Here are the latest developments in the Israeli aggression that is trying to the south cut off from the other Lebanese areas by means of the guns of its warships cruising off the al-Awwali coast up to 'Adlun and al-Sarafand. Qasim Safa, NATIONAL NEWS AGENCY correspondent in Tyre has this report:

[Begin recording] [passage omitted] The Israeli war machine has not abated during the night. At midnight, helicopters raided Majdal Silm, targeting houses that are reported to be uninhabited. Meanwhile, warplanes were flying at very low altitude, breaking the sound barrier and dropping thermal balloons and flares.

At 0030 [2130 GMT] today, the villages of Yatar, Siddiqin, Jibal al-Butm, and the vicinity of Qana came under artillery bombardment that continued intermittently until 0200 while warplanes raided Wadi 'Ashur. Dayr 'Amis and al-Malikiyah also came under artillery bombardment.

At the same time, helicopters raided the vicinity of Majdal Silm, which together with Haddathah came under concentrated artillery bombardment.

Security sources said a salvo of rockets was fired at 0010 toward the interior. [as heard]

Warplanes renewed their raid and attacked Majdal Silm and Khirbat Silm. The two towns, together with al-Suwwanah, Qabrikha, and Wadi al-Qaysiyah came under artillery bombardment.

Reconnaissance planes continued their sorties.

The same sources also reported that a second salvo of rockets was fired toward the interior.

At 0200, an Israeli warship bombarded the coastal area between 'Adlun and Lubyah while helicopters were raiding Dayr 'Amir.

Sources said two salvos of rockets were fired at 0130 and 0140 toward the interior.

At 0300, the enemy artillery bombarded Dayr Kifa, Qallawiyah, and Burj Qallawiyah. These bombardments, mock raids, and real raids lasted until dawn. Helicopters raked the valleys adjacent to the front lines at 0600 today. At 0630, al-Knaysah and 'al-Izziyah in the central sector came under intermittent bombardment.

Warplanes and helicopter gunships are still flying over the area, while the villages of the western and central sectors are coming under intermittent bombardment. Warships are cruising off the south coast. [passage omitted] [end recording]

The NATIONAL NEWS AGENCY correspondent in al-Nabatiyah, 'Ali Badr-al-Din, has this to report:

[Begin recording] [passage omitted] At 0645, Israeli warships bombarded the coastal road between al-Saksakiyah and 'Adlun, in addition to ceaselessly bombarding the road. That lasted from midnight till morning.

Israeli warplanes continued their raids on a number of villages in the al-Nabatiyah from 2330 until the early hours of this morning, targeting Wadi al-Kufur, the hills of Jibshit, Haruf, 'Abba, Shuqin, and 'Atshit. The raids were followed by artillery bombardment of a number of villages in the al-Nabatiyah and Iqlim al-Tuffah areas.

Since 0630, the Israeli occupation forces' position in Tallat 'Ali al-Tahir has been raking the outskirts of al-Nabatiyah, Kafr Rumman, and Kafr Tibnit with heavy machinegun fire, while warplanes continue their sorties. [end recording]

The NATIONAL NEWS AGENCY correspondent in Sidon reported a short while ago that Israeli warships fired two shells on the al-Awwali bridge at 0720. Travel on the bridge in both directions is dangerous.

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Lebanon: IDF Denies Reports of Attacks on UNIFIL

TA2004192196 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1900 GMT 20 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] News correspondents in Lebanon are reporting that the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] stepped up its activities in Lebanon this afternoon. Two Lebanese civilians were reportedly killed in their car while driving from Beirut to Sidon. They were hit by shells fired by Israel Navy gunships. A man was also reported to have been killed in the village of Bra'shit in the central sector. Another report said that an SLA [South Lebanese Army] soldier had been killed in the village of al-Mansuriyah and that three Lebanese soldiers were wounded. The Voice of Lebanon asserts that a UNIFIL [UN Interim Force in Lebanon] medical center near Yatar was struck by a missile fired by an Israeli helicopter. The radio said that the IDF also hit UN vehicles attempting to transfer supplies to a village from which Hizballah fired katyusha rockets at Israel. The IDF has denied these reports.

Lebanon: Israeli Health Minister Meets Lahd, Holds News Conference

NC1904122896 Kafr Killa Voice of the South in Arabic 1130 GMT 19 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] South Lebanese Army Commander Staff General Antoine Lahd today received Israeli Health Minister Efrayim Sne, who said in a news conference after the meeting: I reiterated to General Lahd that our presence in the border area only seeks to deter the threat to our northern borders.

He added: We look at Gen. Lahd as a Lebanese patriot who protects Lebanese interests. There is no comparison between his soldiers and the saboteurs of Hizballah, who want to serve the interests of foreign countries on the land of the south. He is our partner and he is a loyal son of the Lebanese people. Hence, I expressed my regrets, but not my apologies, for what happened in Qana yesterday.

Minister Sne continued: It is Hizballah which turned south Lebanon into a battlefield, using it as a base for firing katyusha rockets at north Israel.

He blamed Hizballah for what happened in Qana, saying the saboteurs of that party are taking civilians as human shields to hide behind. We warned all civilians that they have to stay clear of the places in where Hizballah men are present, adding: What happened in Qana is that the saboteurs were deployed very close to the location that was bombarded. We had no idea that there were civilians. However, the saboteurs of course knew that there were civilians and took refuge in the vicinity of that location. Hizballah is, therefore, fully responsible for what happened in Qana.

Touching on Israel's view of the Shiite sect and Hizballah's attempt to show Israel as the enemy of Shiites, Sne said: Israel has never been the enemy of Shiites. But it is against the operations of Hizballah, which does not represent Islam or Shiites or even the aspirations of the Shiite sect in Lebanon, which is known for its love for the homeland and neighborly relations.

He revealed that the dignitaries of the Shiite sect in the region have expressed their indignation at Hizballah's exploitation of schools, mosques, and civilians in their villages to carry out plots and undertake terrorist operations against the border region, because it knows that Israel will not return fire at civilians.

Sne added: The majority of Shiites in the border region support what Israel is doing to put an end to that militia's operations. They are requesting Israel not let any future agreement allow the recurrence of Hizballah's terrorist acts, which obstruct peace between Israel and Syria and Lebanon.

Sne reaffirmed that the enemies of Shiites are those who have offered them as a sacrifice for years. It is Hizballah elements who harm the Shiites. At Iran's orders, they are turning Shiites into victims of the guns and Katyusha rockets.

Asked how long Operation Grapes of Wrath will continue, he said that the operation will continue as long as no cease-fire has been announced. He said that the scheduled time of the operation will not be affected by the Israeli day of independence, which falls on Wednesday [24 April].

Sne said that the regrettable incident that occurred in Qana will not dissuade Israel from moving ahead toward its objective in this operation. Whoever fires in the direction of Israel will be the target of the Israeli army, which will destroy that target. If fire comes from the Palestinian camps, these camps will be subject to Israeli response.

Touching on Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri's statements, in which he said that the French and U.S. initiatives might result in a temporary cease-fire, something which does not deny the people's right to resistance, Sne said: Such statements on the potential continuation of the so-called resistance provide cover for Hizballah's terrorism. Whoever releases these statements has to bear the responsibility and consequences. Whoever backs and helps cover up for the so-called resistance has to realize that he will be a target for us. It is not possible to back the acts of saboteurs without bearing the consequences.

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Lebanon: Communique Warns Residents of Named Villages To Leave

NC1904122596 Kafr Killa Voice of the South in Arabic 1213 GMT 19 Apr 96

["Communique No. 10 for Today"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Further to communique no. 4, the Israeli Army will resume operations as of 1900 local time [1600 GMT] today in the following places: Jibshit, 'Adshit, al-Qulaylah, Samiyah. Citizens who have not left these places should leave them quickly. Otherwise, they will be exposing themselves to danger. He who forewarns is excused.

Lebanon: Israeli Navy's 'Preemptive Strikes' Said To Continue

NC1904123296 Kafr Killa Voice of the South in Arabic 1217 GMT 19 Apr 96

["Communique No. 11 for Today"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Further to communique no. 5, the Israeli army announces that warships from its naval fleet continue to carry out their preemptive operations along the coast to prevent Hizballah from reaching the south. The Israeli army once again warns the Lebanese citizens to abstain completely from heading south in order to protect their souls. The Israeli Navy will continue to carry out its missions as part of Operation Grapes of Wrath.

Lebanon: Communique Warns Village Residents To Leave

NC1904132796 Kafr Killa Voice of the South in Arabic 1303 GMT 19 Apr 96

["Communique No. 12 for Today"]

[FBIS Translated Text] As of 1800 local time [1500 GMT] this evening, the Israeli Defense Forces will carry out operations in the villages listed below: Jwayya, Tayr Zibna, Burj Qallawiyah, 'Abba, Zibdin, Duwayr, 'Ayn al-Tinah, Libbaya. All those who are still in these villages should leave them quickly. Whoever stays in them exposes himself to the danger of death. He who forewarns is excused.

Lebanon: Army Communique Reports Shelling, Interception of Ships

NC1904142796 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1406 GMT 19 Apr 96

[Communique issued by the Army Command's Guidance Directorate on 19 April — read by announcer]

[FBIS Translated Text] Since 1100 this morning, the Israeli warships have been intermittently bombarding the northern entrance to the al-Janub [south Lebanon] region at the al-Awwali Bridge, paralyzing traffic in the area.

While Israeli warnings to the inhabitants of some villages to leave their villages and homes continue, the following villages have come under air raids and heavy artillery bombardment: al-Qulaylah, al-Mansuri, Majdal Zun, Mazra'at al-Tayyibah, Yatar, Kafr, Bi'r al-Salasil, Kafr Dunin, Tulin, al-Sawwanah, al-Sultaniyah, Shaqra, Bra'shit, Haddathah, 'Ayta al-Jabal, Khirbat Silm, Zibqin, Jibal al-Butm, Siddiqin, and al-Sama'iyah.

Meanwhile, the Israeli Navy continues to intercept commercial ships heading for the Lebanese ports. Seven ships have been prevented from reaching Beirut Port.

Lebanon: Communique Warns People Not To Approach Hizballah Locations

NC1904181596 Kafr Killa Voice of the South in Arabic 1802 GMT 19 Apr 96

["Communique No. 13 for Today"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Israeli army announces that it will resume its operations against Hizballah terrorists tonight. Anyone who heads south will be considered suspicious and will be putting himself in danger. Civilians are again asked not to go near Hizballah terrorists, their centers, or offices. He who forewarns is excused.

Lebanon: Citizens Warned To Leave Homes, Move Northward

NC2004081496 Kafr Killa Voice of the South in Arabic 0745 GMT 20 Apr 96

["Communique No. 1 for Today"]

[FBIS Translated Text] O Lebanese citizens: The Israeli army is conducting operations against Hizballah terrorists who are continuing their terrorist operations among population centers and using innocent civilians as human shields.

The citizens who have not left their homes yet must leave them immediately and move northward. Anyone who remains in the areas ordered evacuated — or near Hizballah terrorists, bases, offices, ammunition depots, and means of transport — will put himself at risk from the Israeli army's operations against Hizballah.

Moving southward by any means of transportation is forbidden. Every suspicious vehicle is a target of Israeli fire. Moving northward is permitted.

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Lebanon: Israeli Fleet Continuing Action Near Sidon Reported

NC2004083196 Kafr Killa Voice of the South in Arabic 0747 GMT 20 Apr 96

["Communique No. 2 for Today"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Israeli fleet continues to perform the tasks assigned to it in Jisr al-Awwali and the area to its north with a view to preventing Hizballah saboteurs and their weapons and means of transport from moving from the north to the south. Every suspect vehicle will be targeted by Israeli fire. We advise citizens not to travel from Beirut south toward Sidon through Jisr al-Awwali. Violators will be risking their lives. Moving northward is permitted.

Lebanon: Communique Warns People Not To Travel Southward

NC2004082996 Kafr Killa Voice of the South in Arabic 0750 GMT 20 Apr 96

["Communique No. 3 for Today"]

[FBIS Translated Text] To all citizens in the south: Today too, movement to the south on all roads, including the Beirut-Sidon road, continues to be prohibited because the Israeli army continues to attack suspicious vehicles. Those who want to stay safe should not try to move southward; otherwise, they will be endangering their lives. Movement northward is always allowed.

Lebanon: Pro-Israeli Radio Reacts to Hizballah Official's Remarks

NC2004143996 Kafr Killa Voice of the South in Arabic 1351 GMT 20 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] This is a brief response to a statement made by al-Haj Husayn Khalil: The Sawt al-Islam [Voice of Islam] radio this morning carried a statement by al-Haj Husayn Khalil after his meeting with Syrian Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar'. Al-Haj Husayn Khalil spoke about what has been agreed upon with Damascus concerning issues that must govern any potential agreement. These issues include a return to the July [1993] understanding and the need for the Israeli Government to pledge not to repeat its aggressions. These issues also include a recognition of the resistance's legitimacy and its right to track down the occupation soldiers in the occupied strip.

This means that al-Haj Husayn Khalil, assistant Hizballah secretary general for political affairs, has dotted the i's in the provisions he seeks in a ceasefire agreement with Israel. These provisions, of course, will not mention the Lebanese citizens in the border area. It seems that he pretended to ignore them or was forced to ignore them, and both cases are pleasing [last word as heard].

Lebanon: Citizens Warned To Stay Away From Hizballah Offices, Bases

NC2104110596 Kafr Killa Voice of the South in Arabic 1051 GMT 21 Apr 96

["Communique No. 2 for Today"]

[FBIS Translated Text] To the Lebanese citizens: The Israeli army announces that it is continuing its operations against Hizballah in the south, wherever it is found and in any area it operates in. Once again, we warn the citizens who are near Hizballah offices, bases, commands, and the houses of Hizballah members that they should stay away from all the above for their own safety.

Residents of the southern area who have not left their houses yet should do so immediately on hearing this warning. Travelling northward is permissible, but travelling southward remains totally banned. Anyone travelling south will be putting his life at risk. The Israeli army will attack every suspicious means of transport wherever it is.

Lebanon: Radio—Israeli Air Force Attacks Hizballah Targets

NC2104150596 Kafr Killa Voice of the South in Arabic 1445 GMT 21 Apr 96

["Communique No. 3 for Today"]

[FBIS Translated Text] To the Lebanese citizens: In response to Hizballah's firing of Katyushas this morning, Israeli air force planes attacked Hizballah targets in Jibshit, 'Atshit, Majdal Silm, Shaqra, and al-Qulaylah at noon today.

The Israeli army announces that it is continuing its operations against Hizballah terrorists, wherever they are. The Israeli army once again warns the citizens that they should keep away from Hizballah personnel, centers, and buildings for their own safety.

Travelling northward is permissible but travelling southward is totally banned. Anyone who travels southward will put himself at risk. The Israeli army will attack all suspicious vehicles wherever they are. He who forewarns is forearmed.

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Lebanon: Radio Warns Citizens Not To Travel South

NC2204055596 Kafr Killa Voice of the South in Arabic 0423 GMT 22 Apr 96

["Communique No. 1 for Today"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Israeli Navy will continue its operations today all along the coastal road to prevent Hizballah from bringing in help — men, means of transport, and weapons — from north to south. Civilians should not travel from Beirut to Sidon and Tyre in the south on the coastal road. Anyone who does so will be putting his life at risk. Traffic northward is permissible.

Lebanon: Radio Carries Another Warning to Civilians

NC2204055896 Kafr Killa Voice of the South in Arabic 0510 GMT 22 Apr 96

["Communique No. 2 for Today"]

[FBIS Translated Text] To Lebanese citizens: The Israeli army is continuing, today, its operations against the Hizballah terrorists in the south and wherever they are. All civilians who are near Hizballah's houses, offices, bases, commands, and leading figures must, for their own safety, keep away from them. Whoever has not left his residence so as to keep away from them must do so immediately. Travel southward is still banned. Whoever violates this will be putting his life at risk. The Israeli army regards any suspicious means of transport a target. Travel northward is permissible.

Lebanon: Civilians Warned Operations To Resume 0830 GMT

NC2204072396 Kafr Killa Voice of the South in Arabic 0703 GMT 22 Apr 96

["Communique No. 3 for Today"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Within the framework of the operations carried out by the Israeli army against the Hizballah organization, the army will resume its operations at 1130 [0830] today in the following areas: al-Nabatiyah, Jibshit, 'Atshit, Shukin, Khirbat Silm, Majdal Silm, B'ir al-Salasil, Tibnin, al-Sultaniyah, and al-Suwwanah. All citizens in these areas who have been warned but have not yet left the areas must do so as soon as possible. Anyone who stays home be endangering his life, and will be staying at his own risk. He who forewarns is excused.

Lebanon: SLA Radio Incites Southerners Against Hizballah, Iran

NC2204094696 Kafr Killa Voice of the South in Arabic 0912 GMT 22 Apr 96

["Communique No. 4 for Today"]

[FBIS Translated Text] To the sons of the south: Shaykh Na'im Qasim, the number two man in Hizballah, has said in an interview with the magazine AL-USBU' AL-'ARABI: It is not true that we are using civilians as a shield. On the contrary, we are defending them. All our operations took place inside the border strip.

The sons of Jibshit, Yatar, Shaqra, Bra'shit, Khirbat Silm, Majdal Silm, al-Nabatiyah, Jba', Jarju', and 'Ayn Bu Siwar and the sons of dozens of other villages know the truth that Shaykh Na'im Qasim and his ilk do not dare to admit. This truth is that you and your sons, daughters, wives, and all members of your families are being exploited, as human shields for the terrorists, who receive their instructions from abroad and serve the interests of foreigners.

Sons of the south, it is those claiming to be protecting you who are bringing you catastrophes — those who, claiming to be operating only inside the border area, are storing the katyushas, explosives, and all other types of weapons in your villages and towns, and inside your houses and do not hesitate to fire them from the middle of your villages or from their vicinities.

Those who are claiming that they care about your interest are in fact setting up the launching pads for the katyushas near the UN Interim Force in Lebanon positions where hundreds of displaced persons have sought refuge. They are transporting the terrorists and their weapons in civilian ambulances.

Those who are claiming to be your protectors and the defenders of the interests of the sons of the south are, in fact, the reason for the destruction of your houses and south Lebanon — for the sake of their own tyrannical interests.

Sons of the south: Israel wants calm, peace, and good neighborliness, while Iran and Hizballah want destruction and ruin. It behooves you to choose well, for the sake of a better future for yourselves and your children.

Lebanon: Radio—Large-Scale Israeli Operation Possible

NC2104082396 Kafr Killa Voice of the South in Arabic 0810 GMT 21 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] We have just been told by security sources that the Israeli army has sent additional

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reinforcements toward the Lebanese border. This raises the suspicion [yuthir al-shakk] that Israeli intends to launch a large-scale operation.

Lebanon: Palestinian Camp Near Tyre Shelled; Casualties Reported

NC1904135496 Kafr Killa Voice of the South in Arabic 1335 GMT 19 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] It has been learned that the bombardment of al-Rashidiyah camp, south of Tyre, left one person dead and two others wounded.

AFP has reported that four shells landed near the office of Fatah official Sultan Abu-al-'Aynayn.

Lebanon: Israeli Ships Fire at al-Awwali Bridge, al-Rumaylah Area

NC1904145396 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1441 GMT 19 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Israeli warships resumed shelling of the al-Awwali Bridge and al-Rumaylah area. They fired shells at the main highway. As a result of the attacks on the al-Awwali Bridge and al-Rumaylah, traffic in the direction of Sidon-Beirut has stopped. Citizens are warned not to use this road in both directions.

The enemy shelling is even targeting supply convoys that are trying to enter into Sidon via the al-Awwali Bridge.

Lebanon: Air Raids on al-Qulaylah, Shelling of Towns Reported

NC1904165696 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1610 GMT 19 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Enemy aircraft carried out two raids on al-Qulaylah a short while ago, completely destroying two homes.

The bombardment of Jwayya has now intensified. It stretched to the outskirts of al-Mujaydil and Mahrunah towns. Shells of 120-mm and 155-mm calibers are being used.

Also fierce shelling is taking place against the villages of Khirbat Silm, Majdal Silm, Kafra, Yatar, Haris, Haddathah, Tibnin, Shaqra, and Bra'shit and the outskirts of al-Sultaniyah. The shelling is originating from the occupation posts in Jabal Humayyid, Tallat Tallusah, and Bra'shit, as well as from the occupation positions in the border strip.

At this time, helicopters are hovering over Tyre, in the direction of the western sector, in the form of an ambush.

Lebanon: Israeli Ground Forces Said Massing on Lebanese Border

NC2004115796 Kafr Killa Voice of the South in Arabic 1130 GMT 20 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] We start our newscast with this important new item: Various Israeli correspondents have reported that so far they have noticed any signs that Operation Grapes of Wrath is about to end. Far from this, the opposite might be true. According to these correspondents, there has been an escalation of military operations.

Meanwhile, Lebanese security sources in the south report that the Israeli army has considerably reinforced its ground forces on the border with Lebanon as if it is preparing for a large-scale ground operation. [passage omitted]

Meanwhile, Damascus Radio reported a short while ago that the Israeli army has reinforced its forces with scores of armored vehicles and artillery pieces in the eastern sector of the border area. These forces have deployed in Ibil al-Saqy in al-Hasbani, Tallat al-Ahmadiyah, and Taw'amat Niha.

Lebanon: Damascus Reports Israeli Ground Forces Deployment

JN2004122796 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1115 GMT 20 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Israeli air, ground, and naval forces today continued their all-out, destructive war against Lebanon for the 10th consecutive day.

Despite the world pleas and the efforts to stop the bloodshed in Lebanon, Israel deployed fresh military reinforcements, including armored vehicles and artillery batteries. Israel also deployed scores of armored vehicles and artillery batteries in the eastern sector. These forces were deployed in Ibil al-Saqy, in al-Hasbani area; Zaghlah, in Tallat al-Ahmadiyah'; and in Taw'amat Niha. [passage omitted]

Lebanon: Al-Awwali Bridge Shelled; Road to South Paralyzed

NC2004134896 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1333 GMT 20 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] A short while ago, there was hostile Israeli shelling of the al-Awwali Bridge to prevent supplies' convoys from reaching the southern areas. We also learned a short while ago that shelling of the al-Awwali Bridge has increased coming from the hostile gunboats cruising off the coastline. The traffic in both directions has been paralyzed completely. The area north of the bridge was targeted by the shelling.

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in other words, the road between al-Rumaylah and al-Awwali Bridge. At the same time, there are extensive hostile flights over Sidon and the areas around it.

Lebanon: Army—2 Military Personnel 'Martyred' by Israeli Shelling

NC2004165796 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1637 GMT 20 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Army Command's Guidance Directorate issued a statement today noting that most of the villages in the western and central sectors were the target of air raids and artillery shelling of various strength this afternoon. As a result, several people were wounded. Two military personnel were martyred and three others were wounded when their post in al-Mansuri was hit by two missiles fired by an Israeli helicopter.

Lebanon: Israeli Navy Interdicts Roads, Bridges to South

NC2104051196 Kafr Killa Voice of the South in Arabic 0406 GMT 21 Apr 96

["Communique No. 1 for Today"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Israeli Navy is continuing this morning its operations along the coast, including the area north of al-Awwali bridge on the coastal road and the al-Qasimiyah bridge area north of Tyre, to prevent the Hizballah terrorists, their means of transport and weapons from arriving in the south.

Every suspicious vehicle is a target for the Israeli Navy. Travelling from south to north is allowed. Civilians should not travel south from Beirut to Tyre and Sidon along the al-Awwali and al-Qasimiyah bridges. Anyone who defies this warning will be putting his life at risk. He who forewarns is excused.

Lebanon: Amal Groups Reportedly Clash With Israelis, Destroy Tank

NC2104095696 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0930 GMT 21 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Just in from the editors desk: At 1220 [0920 GMT] today, Amal Movement groups attacked the Israeli tanks that were firing at Shaqra, destroying one tank. Clashes raged at the Bra'shit post between the Israeli forces and groups of the Amal Movement. Israeli warplanes interceded immediately and strafed the area of the clashes.

Lebanon: 'Fierce Clashes' Between Amal, Israeli Forces at Shaqra

NC2104101796 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0951 GMT 21 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Just in from the editors' desk: At 1245 [0945 GMT], several artillery rounds landed in Qallawiyah and Burj Qallawiyah. Five smoke shells were fired at the al-Qaysiyah valley and the southern quarter of al-Sawwanah a minute ago.

Meanwhile, fierce clashes are raging between the Israeli forces and the Amal Movement fighters to repulse Israeli attempts to advance on the western quarter of Shaqra. The Amal Movement has released a statement that its groups confronted the Israeli force, destroyed one vehicle and inflicted human and material losses on the enemy, and that the clashes are continuing.

Lebanon: Israeli Shelling of Coastal Road Wounds 2 Army Soldiers

NC2104193696 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1917 GMT 21 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] We have just been informed that the Israeli warships' intermittent shelling of the coastal road continues. This shelling has wounded two Lebanese soldiers in the al-Awwali area. They were taken to the Hammud Hospital in Sidon.

Meanwhile, the Israeli intermittent shelling of villages in the central and western sectors continues. The areas surrounding al-Nabatiyah are also being shelled.

Lebanon: Israelis Step Up Raids, Bombardment in South

NC2204073796 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0700 GMT 22 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The Israeli attacks on southern villages and citizens are continuing. The NATIONAL NEWS AGENCY correspondent in Tulin reports that enemy warplanes raided the outskirts of Majdal Silm ten minutes ago.

At 0900 [0600 GMT], Siddiqin, Kafra, Rishknaniyah, and the al-'Asi road came under heavy artillery fire from the enemy occupation forces' positions.

The NATIONAL NEWS AGENCY correspondent in Sidon reports that the 'Adlun road is coming artillery fire.

Our correspondent in Sidon reported earlier that three 107-mm Katyusha rockets fell on the agent Lahd's [South Lebanese Army] position in Zummarayya at 0230. Israeli artillery retaliated by firing 14 shells on the Mimis frontline. [passage omitted]

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Our correspondent has just reported that helicopters raided the southern quarter of Khirbat Silm three minutes ago. They fired two air-to-surface missiles, hitting a citizen's house. At the same time, two enemy helicopters flew over Tibnin Hospital, where hundreds of displaced families from Tibnin and the surrounding areas have taken refuge. While hovering over the hospital, the helicopters fired two air-to-surface missiles at the Bra'shit-Safad-al-Battikh-Shaqra junction.

Lebanon: Air Raids on Southern Villages, Artillery Shelling Reported

NC2204074796 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0721 GMT 22 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The NATIONAL NEWS AGENCY [NNA] correspondent in Tulin has reported that at 1005 local time [0705 GMT] hostile helicopters carried out three air raids on the towns of Khirbat Silm, Majdal Silm, and Haddathah. The raids were accompanied by violent artillery shelling of Khirbat Silm and intermittent large-caliber shelling of Majdal Silm, Haddathah, Shaqra, Bra'shit, and Qabrikha from the occupation posts in the occupied strip that overlooks these villages. At the same time, hostile warplanes flew at low altitudes overhead, setting up air ambushes in the direction of the western sector.

The NNA correspondent also reported that shortly after 1000, hostile warplanes carried out two successive raids on the 'Abba-Duwayr road and the 'Adshit-Jibshit road. At present, Jibshit, al-Bayyad district in al-Nabatiyah, Shukin, and Mayfadun are coming under continuous Israeli shelling.

[Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic at 0724 GMT reports the following:

["Between 0830 and 1015 local time seven Israeli warplane raids have been reported, on the areas of Jibshit, 'Adshit, and Khirbat Silm. The planes also raided the Bidyas bridge, which links the towns of Hallusiyah and Bidyas. The bridge has been completely destroyed. Security sources reported that the warplanes also dropped some delayed action bombs.

["With regard to artillery shelling, Qa'qa'iyat al-Jisr in al-Nabatiyah District and the areas of Haruf al-Zibbin have been coming under violent artillery shelling since 0955."]

Lebanon: Egyptian Group Threatens To Hit U.S., Israeli Interests

NC2104204096 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 2028 GMT 21 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Egyptian organization Tala'i' al-Fath [Vanguards of Conquest] has threatened to hit U.S. and Israeli interests everywhere in protest of Israel's bombardment of Lebanon and the U.S. position on it.

A statement by the organization said: Blood, not cries, will be the response to the cowardly aggression in Lebanon. There can be nothing but Jihad as a response and stance that must be taken toward the United States and Israel, the statement added.

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Syrian Officials Meet With U.S. Secretary Christopher

JN2004143096

[FBIS Report] The following is media reportage on the meetings in Damascus between U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher and Syrian Officials:

Christopher Arrives in Damascus

"U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher arrived in Damascus at 1600 [1300 GMT] today on a visit to Syria.

"He was received at Damascus International Airport by Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar'; senior Foreign Ministry staff; Walid al-Mu'allim, Syria's ambassador in Washington; and Christopher Ross, U.S. ambassador in Damascus, and his embassy staff."

[Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1420 GMT 20 Apr]

Meets With President al-Asad

"President Hafiz al-Asad received U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher at the People's Palace at 2015 today. Christopher was accompanied by Dennis Ross, U.S. coordinator of the peace process, and Christopher Ross, U.S. ambassador in Damascus.

"The meeting was attended by Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' and Syrian Ambassador in Washington Walid al-Mu'allim."

[Damascus Syrian Arab Television Network in Arabic 1735 GMT 20 Apr]

Christopher Cited on Talks With al-Asad

"President Hafiz al-Asad received U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher at the people's Palace at 2015 today. Christopher was accompanied by Dennis Ross, the U.S. Middle East peace coordinator, and Christopher Ross, the U.S. ambassador in Damascus.

"The meeting was attended by Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' and Syrian Ambassador in Washington Walid al-Mu'allim.

"Talks dealt with the developments in Lebanon and efforts to end the current crisis.

"Following his meeting with President Hafiz al-Asad, Christopher said: As you are aware, President Bill Clinton asked me to come to the region to urge the parties concerned to reach a cease-fire and take steps to restore calm to the region.

"Christopher added: I have just emerged from a meeting with President Hafiz al-Asad that lasted two and a half hours. It was a good, fruitful meeting dealing with a wide range of topics. There was emphasis on the paramount importance of reaching a cease-fire and reemphasizing the 1993 understanding.

"Christopher said that he will be leaving today, Sunday, to meet the Israeli Prime Minister and will return to Damascus later. He added: I would like to say that the United States feels that it bears a special responsibility in attempts to restore calm to the region and enable the parties to resume the peace process. He said: I believe that today's meeting was a first step to continuing this process in a manner as active and effective as possible.

"Answering another question, Christopher said: President Hafiz al-Asad is concerned about a cease-fire and work is continuing to reach that cease-fire.

"The U.S. secretary of state expressed hope of continuing negotiations aimed at restoring calm to the region and making this calm a strong basis for returning to the peace process."

[Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 2215 GMT 20 Apr]

Christopher Leaves Damascus

[FBIS Translated Text] U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher left Damascus at 0900 [0600 GMT] today. He will return to Damascus at 1600 today.

[Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0615 GMT 21 Apr]

Christopher Returns to Damascus

"U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher arrived in Damascus at 1945 [1645 GMT] today. Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar', a number of senior Foreign Ministry officials, Syrian ambassador in Washington Walid al-Mu'allim, U.S. Ambassador in Damascus Christopher Ross, and the U.S. Embassy staff received Christopher at Damascus International Airport."

[Damascus Syrian Arab Television Network in Arabic 1742 GMT 21 Apr]

Meets With al-Asad

"President Hafiz al-Asad received U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher at the People's Palace at 1115 [0815 GMT] today. Christopher was accompanied by Dennis Ross, U.S. coordinator of the peace process, and Christopher Ross, U.S. ambassador in Damascus. The meeting was attended by Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' and Syrian Ambassador in Washington Walid al-Mu'allim.

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"This meeting was followed by an expanded meeting that was attended by the president; Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar'; Nasir Qaddur, minister of state for foreign affairs; 'Adnan 'Imran, assistant foreign minister; and Walid al-Mu'allim and Dr. Mikha'il Wahbah, Syrian delegates to the peace talks."

[Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1015 GMT 22 Apr]

Syria: Western Officials To Hold 4-Way Meeting on Lebanon

JN2004134196 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1115 GMT 20 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The foreign ministers of Russia, France and Italy and the U.S. secretary of state will hold a four-way meeting in Damascus today to discuss the situation in Lebanon.

In a statement yesterday, French Foreign Minister Herve de Charette said the meeting will discuss ways to achieve a cease-fire by all parties and a lasting solution. De Charette said talks are continuing to arrive at a cease-fire. [passage omitted]

Syria: Christopher Meets With Italian, French FM's

JN2004192596 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1815 GMT 20 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] A three-way meeting was held at the U.S. Embassy in Damascus this evening. It comprised U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher, French Foreign Minister Herve de Charette, and Susanna Agnelli, Italian foreign minister and head of the EU delegation.

In a statement to journalists following the meeting, Mrs. Agnelli said: We are doing our best. This evening, we met with U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher and we will hold another meeting tonight after President al-Asad receives Christopher.

Agnelli added: During the meeting, French Foreign Minister Herve de Charette expressed his country's views on the French initiative he worked out, while Christopher expressed the U.S. view.

Mrs. Agnelli said: We are trying to prepare one paper instead of two. This will be easier for all to accept.

On his part, Herve de Charette said: We held talks with Christopher. Russian Foreign Minister Primakov will join us during the meeting which will be held at the French Embassy later tonight. We will assess the situation together.

He added: I invited Christopher to attend this meeting. If, however, he cannot attend because he is being received by President Hafiz al-Asad, we will speak on the telephone in the morning to coordinate the EU, Russian, U.S., and French initiatives in order to come up with the optimal terms for cease-fire.

De Charette continued: I was received by President Hafiz al- Asad. I held talks with Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam and Iranian Foreign Minister Dr. 'Ali Akbar Velayati. We discussed the possibility of achieving a cease-fire which, I hope, will be realized shortly. This is because Lebanon is experiencing a difficult time and the people are suffering much. Hence, we need a quick solution.

Syria: Christopher Meets French, Italian Counterparts

LD2104084196 Paris LCI Television in French 0800 GMT 21 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] French Foreign Minister Herve de Charette and Susanna Agnelli, his Italian counterpart, who represent the EU, met U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher at the U.S. Embassy in Damascus yesterday evening, after over six hours of intense activity:

[Begin de Charette recording in English fading into French translation] We have our proposals and the Americans have theirs, but we have decided to coordinate our actions so as to put pressure on all parties. Thus, it is not a French or an American proposal, but a search for what would be the best solution to reach a cease-fire in a short time. [end recording]

Syrian Officials Meet With Iranian FM Velayati

JN2004053696

[FBIS Report] The following is media reportage on the meetings in Damascus between Iranian Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati and Syrian Officials:

Velayati Met by al-Shar' Upon Arrival

"Iranian Foreign Minister Dr. 'Ali Akbar Velayati arrived in Damascus last night on a visit to Syria. He was welcomed by Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar', senior Foreign Ministry officials, the Iranian ambassador in Damascus, and embassy staff members.

"Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' said that what happened in southern Lebanon is a momentous, brutal massacre and that it has greatly complicated matters and hurt the feelings of all Lebanese, Arabs, and Muslims.

"In a joint statement with Iranian Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati that was given to reporters, al-Shar' said

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that the Israeli aggression must be stopped as soon as possible. He indicated that discussions are being held with our friends in Iran, as well as with France, the EU, and the Americans, in order to put an end to the military actions and Israeli aggression.

"Velayati said that Israel's hostile actions against the Lebanese people must be stopped by any means possible. He said: We hope for assistance from the international community to stop the military action. The root cause must be resolved. He indicated that the root cause is the continued Israeli occupation of Lebanese territory.

"Velayati called for the speedy implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 425, which provides for Israel's withdrawal from southern Lebanon."

[Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0415 GMT 20 Apr]

Meets With President al-Asad

"President Hafiz al-Asad received at the People's Palace at 1530 today Dr. 'Ali Akbar Velayati, foreign minister of the Islamic Republic of Iran and his delegation. Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' and Iranian Ambassador Hasan Akhtari attended the meeting.

"Dr. Veleyati conveyed to the president greetings from Iranian President Hashemi-Rafsanjani, and the president asked him to convey his greetings and good wishes to President Hashemi-Rafsanjani and the Iranian people.

"Talks dealt with the conditions in the region, the Israeli aggression against Lebanon, and the current efforts to stop this aggression."

[Damascus Syrian Arab Television Network in Arabic 1730 GMT 20 Apr]

Tehran TV Reports Meeting With al-Asad

"Foreign Minister Mr. Velayati met the Syrian president [Hafiz al-Asad] today, in Damascus.

"Velayati said that the motive behind the latest rounds of the Zionist regime's attacks against Lebanon was that Tel Aviv was trying to make up for the defeat of the Sharm al-Shaykh meeting. He said: Tel Aviv and Washington are resorting to all sorts of things, including a military pact with Turkey, in order to pursue their expansionist goals in the region.

"He emphasized: The ultimate solution to Lebanon's crisis is for the Zionist occupying forces to withdraw from southern Lebanon.

"The Syrian president said that America's support for the Zionist regime was the reason why Tel Aviv could commit its latest crimes with such impudence. He explained: Israel does not want peace but exploits the peace issue to fulfill its expansionist goals."

[Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1630 GMT 20 Apr]

Meets With Foreign Minister al-Shar'

"An official session of talks was held today between Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' and Iranian Foreign Minister Dr. 'Ali Akbar Velayati. Attending the meeting were Dr. Ahmad Saqr, head of the Foreign Ministry's Asia Desk; Kazem Khonsari, head of the Middle East and North Africa Department at the Iranian Foreign Ministry; Mahmud Hashemi, head of the Iranian Foreign Ministry's First Political Department; and Mohammad Hasan Akhtari, Iran's ambassador in Damascus. The talks dealt with the Israeli aggression against Lebanon and the situation in the region."

[Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1515 GMT 21 Apr]

Meets With Vice President Khaddam

"Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam received Iranian Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati and the delegation accompanying him at 1830 today. The Iranian ambassador in Damascus attended the meeting. The talks dealt with the situation in the region and the Israeli aggression against Lebanon. [passage omitted] In a statement to Syrian Television, Velayati said:"

[Announcer continues] "Since my arrival in Damascus, I have had many contacts with senior Syrian officials. President al-Asad received me and I handed him a message from President Rafsanjani. I have felt the concern of the Syrian officials and the foreign ministers of Europe and Russia, currently in Damascus. I have had good talks with Hizballah leader Shaykh Hasan Nasrallah.

"The main objective of the talks between the foreign ministers of Syria, Iran, the European Union [EU], Russia, Hizballah leaders, and a number of Lebanese officials is to achieve peace in southern Lebanon. This is because southern Lebanon, Beirut, and other Lebanese areas were the target of Israeli aggressions. Throughout the past 10 days, Israel has committed terrible crimes against the Lebanese people. Approximately one half of a million Lebanese have been displaced from their homes. We hope that the efforts of Syria and the EU will stop the Israeli aggression against southern Lebanon. The Islamic Republic of Iran supports the Lebanese Government and people in their legitimate defense against the Israeli aggression."

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[Damascus Syrian Arab Television Network in Arabic 1730 GMT 21 Apr]

Velayati Departs for Morocco

"Iranian Foreign Minister Dr. 'Ali Akbar Velayati left Damascus this morning following a three-day visit to Syria.

"He was seen off at Damascus International Airport by Nasir Qaddur, minister of state for foreign affairs, as well as senior Foreign Ministry officials, the Iranian ambassador in Damascus, and the Iranian Embassy staff.

"Dr. Velayati said that the results of his visit to Syria were positive. He expressed hope for achieving cease-fire in Lebanon.

"In a statement to the SYRIAN NEWS AGENCY, Dr. Velayati said: My visit to Syria, the message to President Hafiz al-Asad from President 'Ali Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani, as well as the talks we held with officials and key figures in Syria and all the officials of the states who came to Syria—such as Russia and France—and the Hizballah leaders, achieved positive results.

"He added: I hope that all international efforts will result in stopping this hostility, this [Israeli] attack, and this massive annihilation of the Lebanese people. He stressed that Iran stands by Syria in these endeavors. He said: We will continue to stand by Syria in these efforts.

"The Iranian foreign minister said he will return to Damascus after paying a visit to Morocco."

[Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0615 GMT 22 Apr]

IRNA Reports Velayati's Departure

"Damascus, April 22, IRNA — Iran's Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati wound up a two-day visit to Damascus and left here for Rabat, capital of Maghreb, Monday morning.

"While in Syria, Velayati embarked on intensive diplomatic efforts to assist the defenceless people of Lebanon by bringing about a halt to the Zionist aggression.

"In his talks with Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad, Vice-president 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam and Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' the Iranian foreign minister reviewed the latest developments in Lebanon.

"He also discussed with his Russian and French counterparts ways to stop the Israeli incursion into Lebanon.

"Moreover, Velayati held talks in Damascus with the leaders of Lebanon's's Hizballah.

"The Iranian foreign minister had earlier visited Ankara."

[Tehran IRNA in English 0751 GMT 22 Apr]

Syria: Iran's Velayati Urges Prevention of 'Zionist Aggression'

LD2004084696 Tehran IRNA in English 0742 GMT 20 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Damascus, April 20, IRNA — Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati said here Saturday morning that countries favoring the preservation of Lebanon should prevent continuation of the brutal Zionist attacks on that country.

Carrying a message of President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani for President Hafiz al-Asad, Velayati made the remark after arrival here.

He stressed that the unequal war and aggression of the Zionist regime against Lebanon should be stopped, saying the continued Zionist occupation of Lebanon was one of the reasons behind the violence.

He stated that the full implementation of U.N. Security Council Resolution 425 was essential.

Syrian Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' also said the Zionist attacks should stop.

Iran, Syria and other regional countries are trying to bring a halt to the aggression committed by the Zionists against the defenseless people of Lebanon.

Velayati is currently on a tour of Turkey, Syria and Maghreb. He is scheduled to meet with ranking Syrian officials to discuss the brutal attacks of the Zionists on Lebanon. He visited Turkey on Friday on the first leg of his tour.

Meanwhile, the foreign ministers of France and Italy, Herve de Charette and Susanna Agnelli, respectively, are currently here and informed sources disclosed that Velayati would be meeting them.

The cessation of Zionist aggression in Lebanon will be the focus of Velayati's talks with his counterparts.

Syria: Iran's Velayati Assesses Lebanon Situation

LD2104135996 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0930 GMT 21 Apr 96

[Interview with Iranian Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati by unidentified correspondent in Damascus on 21 April — recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Correspondent] Mr. Velayati, the Islamic Republic of Iran's political delegation,

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headed by your excellency, made intense efforts yesterday to put an end to the Zionist regime's attacks on Lebanon. What is your excellency's assessment of the situation and developments so far?

[Velayati] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. Good day to the listeners of the Islamic Republic of Iran. During our brief stay in Damascus, intensive political and international efforts were made and, if I were to give a brief and quick assessment of the situation, I have to say that, unfortunately, Israel's air, ground, and sea attacks against the residential areas of southern Lebanon are continuing. The level of destruction in these areas is continually rising and the number of victims is also rising. This is the very bleak side of the situation. From another standpoint, I must say that the very heroic stand of the Hizballah of Lebanon — that is, the Islamic resistance — is becoming more radiant every day.

In reality, on the one hand, these human tragedies have further exposed the squalid face of Israel and have also showed up the nature of America's policies. In the interviews of their senior officials, the Americans have explicitly given the green light to Israel. They had already declared that America would support whatever Israel wanted to do in Lebanon. This is tantamount to giving a blank check to Israel so that it may continue its aggressions.

In fact, Hizballah's continued steadfastness broke the hollow promises of Israel and America in the region. Hizballah showed that if a group of people — however small their number and lacking in financial means — are determined to stand against the aggressions of the Zionist regime, backed by a great military power like America, they can defend themselves, their independence, aspirations, nation, and territory.

Today, Hizballah has the upper hand because of its defensive power and almost all the world's media and political analysts agree on this point.

Here, we are helping the steadfastness of the Lebanese people and government, from a political and international point of view, in the face of aggression. In other words, from a political and international point of view, we are trying to prevent the continuation of the Israeli aggression against the Lebanese territory. We are in contact with countries that are close to Iran, such as Syria, Russia, France, and Italy. Intense and comprehensive consultations are under way to increase the pressure on the Zionist regime and the United States in order to prevent the continuation of the aggression against the innocent people of Lebanon. The United States and France have each proposed a plan. As far as the people of Lebanon are concerned, the American plan is not acceptable because the United States is not neutral. The United States is in total support of Israel and constitutes one side of the equation. Someone who is supporting the aggressor cannot act as a mediator and propose a plan acceptable to the Lebanese people. The French plan is being studied. Of course, the French plan is not acceptable in its entirety, but it is more acceptable because, relatively speaking, France has had better stances and a more realistic plan.

[Correspondent] Mr. Velayati, our country is apparently pursuing other actions, besides political negotiations, to dispatch humanitarian aid to Lebanon. Could you please explain?

[Velayati] As you know, from the very beginning of the ruthless Israeli aggression and the massacre of the innocent people our country began to dispatch aid. This was done by the Foreign Ministry, the Imam Khomeyni Relief Committee, and the Red Crescent Society. A senior political-aid delegation was dispatched to Syria and Lebanon to coordinate these activities. The office of the Imam Khomeyni Relief Committee in Lebanon began the distribution of aid and in the past several days thousands of families have received support from the Islamic Republic of Iran. The Iranian delegation also visited victims of the recent Israeli aggression, in particular the victims of the Qana tragedy. They also visited the refugees in their makeshift camps. Financial support has been provided locally to buy the basic life provisions for distribution among the people, but two large aircraft have also transported aid from the Islamic Republic of Iran, and these efforts are continuing.

We hope that other Islamic countries will also bear their humanitarian and Islamic responsibility. They should not remain silent, politically or in terms of humanitarian aid. They should come to support these dear people who are standing in the face of the ruthless Israeli aggression with their faith.

[Correspondent] Thank you.

Syria: Iran's Velayati—Humanitarian Aid Sent to Lebanon

LD2004182596 Tehran IRNA in English 1725 GMT 20 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Damascus, April 20, IRNA — Iranian Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati told reporters here today that "the issue of the Zionist aggression against the defenceless people should be put an end to, with the cooperation and coordination of regional countries.

Velayati who arrived in the Syrian capital this morning, added: "all-out efforts and consultations are underway

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to end the savage aggression of the Zionist regime on Lebanon."

He said Iran, Syria and Lebanon, as the "important countries of the region" are coordinating their views.

Velayati reiterated that "the Islamic Republic of Iran will continue its humanitarian relief assistance to the defenceless people of Lebanon."

Since the start of Israel's fresh wave of state terrorism, several consignments of Iranian relief aid made up of foodstuffs, clothings and medical assistance, have been distributed to the displaced people of Lebanon.

The ongoing Zionist attacks which have shocked world conscience, have displaced over half-a-million people, killed more than 150 and injured 300 others, besides inflicting enormous damage to the property and economic life of the Lebanese people.

Last Thursday alone, the Israelis killed over 100 persons and injured many more, when they targetted a United Nations post which had provided shelter to the refugees.

Israel, which occupies the southern strip of Lebanon, has repeatedly ignored United Nations Security Council Resolution 425 which calls for the unconditional withdrawal of its troops.

Syria: Iran's Velayati Gives Hizballah's Views on Cease-Fire

LD2104200296 Paris TF-1 Television Network in French 1800 GMT 21 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] On this 11th day of clashes between Israel and Hizballah, the rocket fire and shelling in southern Lebanon have continued, in any case early today, before the cease-fire announced by Israel. In the meantime, the European and American foreign ministers have been stepping up their meetings. As I was telling you, Herve de Charette was in Damascus first of all, then in Beirut, and this evening is back in Israel again, and the American, Warren Christopher, has also gone from Damascus to Jerusalem and, as I told you, ended up by persuading Israel to agree to a cease-fire before more long-term security arrangements can be worked out, and this evening he is back in Syria again.

In all these meetings one of the westerners' main interlocutors was the Iranian, 'Ali Akbar Velayati, as it is Iran that backs and arms the Hizballah militias. Along with Syria, Tehran is thus a decisive element in the game in the Middle East, and so far France's diplomatic efforts have been fairly well received by the Iranians. Let us take stock of the situation with our special correspondents in Damascus, Nahida Nakad and Michel Nogaret:

[Nakad] The European diplomats left Damascus this evening without waiting for the announcement of a cease-fire agreement for the Lebanon. This afternoon U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher returned to the Syrian capital, apparently with new proposals. The Iranian foreign minister remained here. He is in constant contact with Hizballah. We asked him if he was able to get the Lebanese fundamentalists to stop their attacks on Israel:

[Begin recording] [Velayati, in English with superimposed French translation] Hizballah is not against a cease-fire, but it wants guarantees that Israel will not attack the population any more, because once a cease-fire has been established, the Lebanese will return to their villages with confidence. However, if they are shelled Hizballah will then lose all its credibility.

[Nakad] How important, in your view, is the French mediation effort?

[Velayati] We believe that the French proposals are both more moderate and also more acceptable than the American plan. [end recording]

[Nakad] The French cease-fire plan proposes that the two sides spare the civilians, that Hizballah should no longer fire rockets at northern Israel and in exchange Israel will not shell the Lebanese civilian population. The Americans want to go further — they propose to disarm Hizballah and ban it from attacking the Israeli soldiers occupying southern Lebanon.

Syria: Al-Asad Receives Lebanon's Birri

JN1904203596 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 2015 GMT 19 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] President Hafiz al-Asad received Lebanese Chamber of Deputies Speaker Nabih Birri today. Vice President 'Abd- al-Halim Khaddam attended the meeting.

The talks dealt with the tragic situation in Lebanon as a result of the escalating Israeli aggression against Lebanon, its citizens and economic facilities. The talks also dealt with the Arab and international efforts underway to stop the Israeli aggression against our people in fraternal Lebanon.

Syria: Al-Shar' Receives Hizballah's Nasrallah

NC2004111596 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1105 GMT 20 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Damascus, 20 Apr (MENA)— Syrian Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' received Hizballah Secretary General Shaykh Hasan Nasrallah, who arrived at the head of a Hizballah delegation earlier today.

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An official Syrian source said that the meeting focused on the Israeli aggression against Lebanon, the military operations taking place there, and the ongoing efforts to put a final end to the 10-day crisis.

Syria: Al-Shar' Receives Hizballah's Nasrallah

JN2004121196 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1115 GMT 20 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' received a Hizballah delegation, led by Shaykh Hasan Nasrallah, this morning. They discussed the Israeli aggression, the military operations, and the efforts to resolve the crisis once and for all.

Syria: Al-Asad Speaks With Lebanese Counterpart

JN2004180996 Damascus Syrian Arab Television Network in Arabic 1734 GMT 20 Apr 96

[Announcer-read report]

[FBIS Translated Text] President Hafiz al-Asad and Lebanese President Ilyas al-Hirawi spoke on the telephone this evening.

They exchanged views on the current situation in Lebanon and the ongoing talks in Damascus among Syria, the U.S. secretary of state, the Russian foreign minister, the French foreign minister, the EU delegation, and the Iranian foreign minister.

Syrian Officials Meet With Russian FM Primakov

JN2004101196

[FBIS Report] The following is media reportage on the meetings in Damascus between Russian Foreign Minister Yevgeniy Primakov and Syrian Officials:

Primakov Arrives in Damascus

"Russian Foreign Minister Yevegeniy Primakov and his delegation arrived in Damascus today on a visit to the Syrian Arab Republic. He was received at Damascus International Airport by Nasir Qaddur, minister of state for foreign affairs; Raslan 'Allush, assistant foreign minister; a number of senior Foreign Ministry officials; and the Russian ambassador in Damascus.

"In a statement to a SANA correspondent, Primakov said: Clearly, we are very much against Israel's strike at independent Lebanon. We also condemn any terrorist operations against safe inhabitants. We have come here to exchange viewpoints with friends and with the Syrian political leadership, with whom we are bound by long-standing relations. We continue to support Syria for the sake of its independence and security and hope the talks with our Syrian friends will be fruitful."

[Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0915 GMT 20 Apr]

Meets With President al-Asad

"President Hafiz al-Asad received at the People's Palace at 1830 today Yevgeniy Primakov, Foreign Minister of the Russian Federation, and his delegation. Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' and the Russian ambassador in Damascus attended the meeting.

"Primakov conveyed to the president greetings from President Boris Yeltsin, and the president asked him to convey his greetings and good wishes to President Yeltsin and the Russian people. Talks dealt with the situation created by Israel's aggression against Lebanon and the efforts being made to end it.

"Primakov expressed Russia's concern over the situation.

[Damascus Syrian Arab Television Network in Arabic 1730 GMT 20 Apr]

Primakov Departs for Beirut

"Russian Foreign Minister Yevgeniy Primakov left Damascus for Beirut this morning at the conclusion of a two-day visit to the Syrian Arab Republic. He was seen off at Damascus International Airport by Nasir Qaddur, state minister for foreign affairs; Raslan 'Allush, assistant foreign minister; Foreign Ministry officials; the Russian ambassador in Damascus; and Russian Embassy officials. Primakov told a SANA correspondent that the results of his visit to Syria were very good. He said he will return to Damascus tomorrow."

Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0715 GMT 21 Apr]

Primakov Returns to Damascus

"Russian Foreign Minister Yevgeniy Primakov and the delegation accompanying him arrived in Damascus this morning. Primakov was received at Damascus International Airport by Nasir Qaddur, minister of state for foreign affairs, some senior ministry officials, the Russian ambassador in Damascus, and the Russian Embassy staff."

[Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0815 GMT 22 Apr]

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Syrian Officials Meet With French FM de Charette
JN19411096

[FBIS Report] The following is media reportage on the meetings in Damascus between French Foreign Minister Herve de Charette and Syrian Officials:

De Charette Arrives in Damascus

"French Foreign Minister Herve de Charette arrived in Damascus today on a visit to the Syrian Arab Republic. He was received at Damascus International Airport by Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar', a number of senior Foreign Ministry officials, the French ambassador in Damascus, and French Embassy officials.

"De Charette, speaking to a reporter for the SYRIAN ARAB NEWS AGENCY, SANA, described the developments that took place in southern Lebanon yesterday as dreadful, and necessitate that we move quicker than ever to reach a cease-fire agreement. De Charette added: This is a crucial and tragic point, and we hope that a cease-fire will be reached quickly to make sure that such incidents will not happen in the future.

"Asked by reporters to comment on the tragic incident that took place in Lebanon yesterday, Foreign Minister al-Shar' said: It is a terrible tragedy that shows that Israel is seriously seeking war rather than peace.

"Answering another question on his expectations of a cease-fire, the minister said: We hope a cease-fire will take place as soon as possible. Asked about the U.S. secretary of state's visit to Damscus and the U.S. role, al-Shar' said: It is possible that the visit will take place tomorrow. We, the Lebanese, and all those concerned are looking into developments, and we are still waiting."

[Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1115 GMT 19 Apr]

Meets With Foreign Minister al-Shar'

"Talks were held last night between a Syrian delegation, led by Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar', and a French delegation, led by Foreign Minister Herve de Charette. The meeting was attended by 'Adnan 'Imran, assistant foreign minister; 'Abd-al-Hasib al-Ustuwani, director of the West Europe Desk; (Dennis Bouchar), director of the North Africa and Middle East Desk; (Andre Baran); and Jean-Claude Cousseran, French ambassador in Damascus. The discussions focused on the Israeli aggression against Lebanon and the French initiative."

[Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0415 GMT 20 Apr]

Meets With Vice President Khaddam "Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam received French Foreign Minister Herve de Charette at 1030 today. The French ambassador in Damascus attended. Khaddam and De Charette discussed the developments that have resulted from the ceaseless Israeli aggression against Lebanon and the efforts to stop it."

[Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1115 GMT 20 Apr 96]

Meets With President al-Asad

"Herve de Charette was received at midday by President Hafiz al-Asad. The French foreign minister forwarded the plan proposed by Paris for an end to the fighting."

[Begin Herve de Charette recording] "There are some positive elements including mainly the intention which was expressed — I believe with sincerity — by all parties to reach a peace solution. On the whole, the matter is about turning these intentions into deeds. This is what we are working for and I am pleased that Yevgeniy Primakov, Warren Christopher and Susanna Agnelli have joined me.

"I suggested that we would meet as of this evening so as to coordinate our efforts and promptly obtain an adequate arrangement enabling the return of refugees and an end to the crisis." [end recording]

[Paris France-Info Radio in French 1300 GMT 20 Apr]

Damascus Reports Meeting With al-Asad

"President Hafiz al-Asad received French Foreign Minister Herve de Charette and his delegation at 1330 today. The meeting, which took place at the People's Palace, was attended by Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' and French Ambassador in Damascus Jean-Claude Cousseran."

[Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1415 GMT 20 Apr]

De Charette Makes Statements, Leaves for Beirut

"Damascus, 21 Apr (SANA)— French Foreign Minister Herve de Charette left Damascus for Beirut this morning. He was seen off at Damascus International Airport by Assistant Foreign Minister 'Adnan 'Imran, head of the West Europe Desk at the Foreign Ministry, the French ambassador in Damascus, and French embassy officials.

"In a statement to the SYRIAN ARAB NEWS AGENCY, SANA, De Charette said: We are at a

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decisive stage. I believe the time to make decisions on the situation in Lebanon is drawing near. I am satisfied with my talks with President Hafiz al-Asad and Syrian officials. They were positive and encouraging.

"De Charette added: I will certainly return to Damascus, depending on how things go and how the situation in Lebanon unfolds. He added: I will meet with Lebanese officials in Beirut and then go to southern Lebanon to salute the UN forces there. I will also visit Qana and the UN camp where the well-known disastrous massacre took place to commemorate all those who have had to endure this suffering. I will also visit the victims.

"De Charette lauded the bravery of the UN forces in southern Lebanon, who are helping the victims and continuing to perform their duties, even though some of them were wounded."

[Damascus SANA in Arabic 0830 GMT 21 Apr]

Returns to Damascus

"French Foreign Minister Herve de Charette arrived in Damascus at noon [0900 GMT] today. He was received at Damascus International Airport by Wahib Fadil, minister of state for presidential affairs; 'Abd-al-Hasib al-Ustuwani, head of the West Europe Department at the Foreign Ministry; some senior Foreign Ministry officials; the French ambassador, and the French Embassy staff in Damascus."

[Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1019 GMT 22 Apr]

Meets Again With al-Asad

"President Hafiz al-Asad received French Foreign Minister Herve de Charette and his delegation at 1330 today. The meeting, which took place at the People's Palace, was attended by Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' and French Ambassador in Damascus Jean-Claude Cousseran.

"De Charette conveyed to the president greetings from French President Jacques Chirac. The president asked him to convey greetings to President Chirac.

"Discussion focused on the efforts to deal with the situation resulting from the Israeli aggression against Lebanon and to find a solution to it.

"De Charette briefed the president on the contacts he made with the concerned parties."

[Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1515 GMT 20 Apr]

Syrian Officials Meet With Italian FM Agnelli
JN194183396

[FBIS Report] The following is media reportage on the meetings in Damascus between Italian Foreign Minister Susanna Agnelli and Syrian Officials:

Agnelli Arrives in Damascus

"Damascus, 19 Apr (SANA) — Italian Foreign Minister Mrs. Susanna Agnelli arrived in Damascus this evening on a visit to the Syrian Arab Republic. Mrs. Agnelli is leading an EU delegation.

"Mrs. Agnelli was received at Damascus International Airport by Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar', senior Foreign Ministry officials, and a number of EU ambassadors in Damascus.

"In a statement to a SANA correspondent, Agnelli said: The purpose of my visit to Damascus is to discuss prospects for an immediate cease-fire in southern Lebanon, since my country is the current EU president. We think the situation in Lebanon is very serious for the entire region."

[Damascus SANA in Arabic 1730 GMT 19 Apr]

Meets With Foreign Minister al-Shar'

"A session of talks was held today between the Syrian side, led by Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar', and the European side, led by Italian Foreign Minister Susanna Agnelli, whose country is the current EU chairman.

"Attending the meeting were 'Abd-al-Hasib al-Ustuwani, head of the West Europe Desk at the Foreign Ministry, and the delegation accompanying Mrs. Agnelli.

"The talks dealt with the Israeli aggression against Lebanon and the efforts being made to achieve a cease fire."

[Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 2015 GMT 19 Apr]

Meets With President al-Asad

"President Hafiz al-Asad received Italian Foreign Minister Susanna Agnelli and her EU delegation at 1200 today. The meeting, which took place at the People's Palace, was attended by Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar'.

"Discussion focused on the situation in Lebanon in the light of the ceaseless Israeli aggression.

"Mrs. Agnelli briefed the president on the EU delegation's mission, which seeks to achieve a cease-fire and

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pave the way for a solution to the questions of peace in the region. She said: The EU denounced the massacre committed in Lebanon.

"The president outlined the efforts which Syria is exerting, in cooperation with certain parties, to deal with the situation that resulted from Israel's aggression, which violated the laws of war and the laws of peace. His excellency underlined the need for Europe to play an effective role in the region.

"Mrs. Agnelli said her talks with President Hafiz al-Asad were excellent and constructive. In a statement to a SYRIAN ARAB NEWS AGENCY, SANA, correspondent, following her meeting with the president, Agnelli said that her meeting with the president focused on the situation in Lebanon in the light of the recent developments.

"She praised the full and important role which Syria plays in the region."

[Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1515 GMT 20 Apr]

Agnelli Leaves Damascus

"Damascus, 21 Apr (SANA)—Mrs. Susanna Agnelli, Italian foreign minister and head of the EU delegation, and the delegation accompanying her left Damascus for Beirut this morning.

"Assistant Foreign Minister 'Adnan 'Imran, the director of the Foreign Ministry's West Europe Desk, senior Foreign Ministry officials, and several EU ambassadors in Damascus saw her off at Damascus International Airport.

"Agnelli told a SYRIAN ARAB NEWS AGENCY correspondent that she hopes a cease-fire will take place in Lebanon within the next few hours.

"Agnelli said: I hope that what we did was somewhat beneficial and that a cease-fire will be implemented in the next few hours. Agnelli explained, however, that this depends largely on both sides.

"Agnelli said that she has done all she can and has explained the EU's viewpoint on the issue to His Excellency President Hafiz al- Asad. She said: We have no specific plans, however."

[Damascus SANA in Arabic 0835 GMT 21 Apr]

Syria: Hizballah's Nasrallah Meets With Iran's Velayati

NC2004092996 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0903 GMT 20 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The security forces have again closed the road between al-Awwali and al-Rumaylah after having opening it for 10 minutes. The reason for the closure was the Israeli warships' resumption of their bombardment of vehicles using this road.

Meanwhile, Tehran radio said a short time ago that Iranian Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati had met in Damascus with a Hizballah delegation led by Shaykh Hasan Nasrallah. It said that Velayati reiterated Iran's support for that party. The Iranian foreign minister said that his country will continue its support for Lebanon, but gave no further explanations.

Shaykh Nasrallah asserted Hizballah's determination to continue to defend Lebanese territory from Zionist aggression.

Syria: Iran's Velayati Meets With Hizballah's Nasrallah

LD2004105596 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 0930 GMT 20 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Our country's foreign minister, 'Ali Akbar Velayati, who arrived in Damascus from Ankara last night, is expected to meet senior Syrian officials for talks on the Zionist attacks on South Lebanon.

After his arrival in Damascus, Velayati met Sayyid Hasan Nasrullah, secretary general of Lebanon's Islamic revolutionary movement, Hizballah.

In this meeting the secretary general of Hizballah reported on the latest situation in Lebanon and the endless Zionist crimes against Muslim people and stressed that the struggle against Israel would continue.

Syria: Primakov Meets French, Iranian Counterparts

JN2004150396 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1415 GMT 20 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Russian Foreign Minister Yevgeniy Primakov today met with French Foreign Minister Herve de Charette at the Russian Embassy in Damascus. They discussed ways to arrive at a cease-fire and stop Israeli shelling of Lebanon, as well as the prospects for resuming the peace process after the recent setbacks.

Primakov made a statement to a SYRIAN ARAB NEWS AGENCY, SANA, correspondent in which he

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said: The French have proposed a plan to resolve the situation in Lebanon. This plan may serve as the basis for further action and discussion.

He said: Syria has its position which must be taken into consideration. Also, both Lebanon and Israel have their own positions. We must do everything possible to achieve a settlement.

Primakov also met today with Iranian Foreign Minister Dr. 'Ali Akbar Velayati at the Russian Embassy in Damascus. They discussed developments in Lebanon.

Syria: Iranian, French Foreign Ministers Meet

JN2004081896

[FBIS Report] The following is media reportage on the meetings in Damascus between French Foreign Minister Herve de Charette and Iranian Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati:

De Charette, Velayati Meet at French Embassy

"Damascus, 20 Apr (SANA)—French Foreign Minister Herve de Charette met with his Iranian counterpart, 'Ali Akbar Velayati, at the French Embassy in Damascus this morning. De Charette said in a statement last night that he was ready to meet with the Iranian foreign minister to discuss the situation in Lebanon.

[Damascus SANA in Arabic 0800 GMT 20 Apr]

Second Meeting Reported

"The French and Iranian foreign ministers, Herve de Charette and 'Ali Akbar Veleyati, held two meetings at the French Embassy in Damascus. The Iranian and French ambassadors in Damascus attended.

"At the end of the meeting (Yve de Terrio), assistant French Foreign Ministry spokesman, told the press that in the two meetings, the two sides discussed the current situation in Lebanon, the prospects for a cease-fire, and ending the military operations as soon as possible."

[Damascus Syrian Arab Television Network in Arabic 1730 GMT 20 Apr]

IRNA Reports Velayati's Meeting With de Charette

"Damascus, April 20, IRNA — Iranian Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati in a meeting with his French counterpart Herve de Charette in the Syrian capital on Saturday exchanged views on ending the Israeli aggression on Lebanon, and preventing more human casualties.

"De Charette, noting Iran's role in the region for finding a proper solution to the issue, said paris attaches importance to its relations with Tehran, and knows that the Islamic Republic has influence in Lebanon.

"Velayati in reply branded the Zionist regime as the violater of the 1993 accord, and said that Iran will not spare any efforts for stopping the Zionist regime from its aggressions, and bringing about conditions which could guarantee the security of the people of Lebanon.

"'Documents and evidence prove that the Zionists initiated this bloodbath, and it is natural for the people of Lebanon and the Hizballah to defend themselves and their soil,'" he said.

"Velayati added that only a plan which would end Zionist aggression on Lebanon for good, would succeed.

"The two foreign ministers had common views on the worsening of the situation in Lebanon."

[Tehran IRNA in English 2157 GMT 20 Apr]

Syria: Iran's Velayati—Hizballah Must Get Guarantees

LD2004180496 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1630 GMT 20 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] In Damascus today, the foreign ministers of the Islamic Republic of Iran and Russia discussed ways of bringing to an end the attacks of the Zionist regime on Lebanon.

[Unidentified correspondent] At the meeting, [Russian Foreign Minister Yevgeniy] Primakov referred to the sensitivity of the situation and, describing [Iranian Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar] Velayati's presence in Damascus as very important, he said that, in view of the overall exchanges of views between Iran, France, Syria, Russia, and Italy, there were good grounds for the resolution of the crisis.

Velayati, for his part, spoke of the dimensions of the crimes and acts of aggression committed by the Zionist regime in Lebanon and described that regime as a violator of all international and regional rules and regulations. Our country's foreign minister said that the Lebanese people had a legitimate right to defend their territory and explained: Hizballah is carrying out a rightful defense of the Lebanese territory and nation.

Velayati announced the Islamic Republic of Iran's consent to any joint and coordinated action with Syria, Russia, France, and Italy — as the president of the European Union — which embraces the interests of the Lebanese people and prevents Israel from continuing its crimes, and stressed: For the sake of the future of peace in Lebanon, greater guarantees must be given to

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Hizballah, assuring that the July 1993 accord will not be violated once again.

With the arrival of the diplomatic representatives of Western countries, the United States, and Russia in the region, there are now various peace proposals and, in view of the unconditional support given by Washington for the recent crimes of the Zionist regime, there is no optimism regarding the U.S. proposal for ending the crisis.

Sources close to the talks between the diplomatic representatives state that the views of Russia and European countries, regarding a way to solve the crisis, are closer to the views of the countries that count in the region, that is, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Lebanon, and Syria.

This correspondent of the Voice and Vision of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Damascus.

Syria: Iran's Velayati, Russia's Primakov Meet

LD2004190396 Tehran IRNA in English 1828 GMT 20 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Damascus, April 20, IRNA — Iranian Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati and his Russian counterpart Yevgeniy Primakov, in a meeting in the Syrian capital on Saturday discussed regional developments.

Primakov termed "significant" Velayati's presence here in view of the sensitive developments in the region, and expressed hope that the negotiations would help put an end to Israel's attacks against the Lebanese people.

Primakov said that Russia would support a European plan acceptable to regional countries.

Velayati referring to the sensitivity of the region and the dimensions of the crimes and aggressions of the Zionist regime, held Israel responsible for violating international norms and accords.

"The Lebanese people are defending their country and in order to ensure peace and tranquility in Lebanon, the focus should be on more guarantees," he said.

"The Hizballah are engaged in the legitimate defence of their countrymen and their (Israeli) occupied homes and hearth," Velayati told his Russian counterpart.

He added that "Iran will not oppose any coordinated effort by Syria, France and Russia which is in the interest of the Lebanese people to rein in the aggressions of the Zionist regime."

Velayati, like Primakov, arrived in the Syrian capital early today. He is on the second leg of his three-nation trip, which started in Turkey on Friday [19 April] and will end in Maghreb.

Meanwhile, sources close to the Iranian delegation said that different plans and opinions have been put forward for ending the Zionist aggression, but that all of them are cynical of the American plan.

They said that in reality, U.S. support for the Zionist regime is the factor behind the recent crimes and messacre in Lebanon, and that without doubt Washington's plans would be tilted in the favour of the Zionists.

"The regional people, particularly the Lebanese and Syrian, have a negative view of the U.S. plans and do not regard them to be in the interest of peace or without support for the Zionist regime," they added.

Diplomatic circles in the region say that since the recent crimes of Zionist regime, has created a new consensus among countries for defence against aggression, pressure should be exerted on Israel against any future attack on Lebanon.

Syria: France's de Charette Outlines French Proposal on Lebanon

LD2004181096 Paris France-Inter Radio Network in French 1700 GMT 20 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] French Foreign Minister Herve de Charette believes today and tomorrow will be decisive. De Charette first had a meeting with Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad. He then met Iranian Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati. De Charette explains his proposals in an interview with Rachel (Berlinguez):

[Begin de Charette recording] France has in fact made a proposal: the creation of a security committee, which would make it possible to prevent an incident that occurs in southern Lebanon from transforming itself, spreading like a fire and causing an escalation of violence. We would like this committee to make it possible for the interested parties, a few guarantor countries — in particular the United States, France, and others, of course — to sit down around the same table, so that a body exists where one can meet to discuss the causes of the incident and prevent the immediate eruption of revenge, retaliation, and an escalation of violence, which caused the crisis we are experiencing, as you know. The question that arises is whether or not Iran will significantly contribute to lessening tension in southern Lebanon. [end recording]

De Charette has subsequently met U.S. Secretary of State Christopher. [passage omitted]

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Syria: Russia's Primakov Cited on Talks With French Counterpart

JN2004172696 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1515 GMT 20 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Within the context of the political efforts Damascus is witnessing today, Russian Foreign Minister Yevegeniy Primakov today met with French Foreign Minister Herve de Charette at the Russian Embassy in Damascus. They discussed ways to achieve a cease-fire and stop Israeli shelling of Lebanon, as well as the prospects for resuming the peace process after the recent setbacks.

In a statement to a SYRIAN ARAB NEWS AGENCY, SANA, correspondent Primakov said: The French have proposed a plan to resolve the situation in Lebanon. This plan may serve as the basis for further action and discussion.

He said: Syria has its position which must be taken into consideration. Also, both Lebanon and Israel have their own positions. We must do everything possible to achieve a settlement.

Primakov also met today with Iranian Foreign Minister Dr. 'Ali Akbar Velayati at the Russian Embassy in Damascus. They discussed developments in Lebanon.

Following his meeting with de Charette, Primakov made a statement to journalists in which he said: I am now in Damascus because I fully realize the role which Damascus plays. I am also aware of the role Syria plays in the entire peace process. Syria also has the major role to play in finding a solution to the situation that developed in Lebanon.

He added that he does not have a ready-made Russian initiative. He said: Russia will support the initiative that would lead to peace. I do not want to set an initiative that would conflict with another. It is up to the two parties to choose the option that satisfies them. No initiative should serve the interests of one party at the expense of the other.

He said that his objective, and the objective of the French and Italian foreign ministers and the U.S. secretary of state, who are now in Damascus, is to arrive at an immediate cease-fire, end the tragic situation in Lebanon, and take the necessary measures to stop the military escalation and the shelling of civilians.

De Charette also made a statement to journalists in which he said he is optimistic that a solution can be found in Lebanon following the tragedy that occurred in Qana which had serious and deep consequences that affected the peace process.

He said: All the parties emphasized the need to find a solution in Lebanon. We — the foreign ministers of Russia, Italy, France, and Syria and the U.S. secretary of state — will work together to achieve a cease-fire and fruitful results and ensure the return of displaced persons to their homes.

Syria: French, Italian, Russin FM's Meet

JN2004212796 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 2015 GMT 20 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] French Foreign Minister Herve de Charette, Russian Foreign Minister Yevgeniy Primakov, and Susanna Agnelli, Italian foreign minister and head of the EU delegation, met at a working dinner at the French Embassy in Damascus this evening.

During this meeting, the ministers completed the consultations regarding the talks held today to reach cease-fire in Lebanon.

Syria: Khaddam Receives German Official

JN2004185496 Damascus Syrian Arab Television Network in Arabic 1730 GMT 20 Apr 96

[Announcer-read report]

[FBIS Translated Text] Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam today received Helmut Schiffer, minister of state in the German Foreign Ministry. The German ambassador in Damascus attended the meeting.

Talks dealt with the situation resulting from the continuing Israeli aggression against Lebanon and the need to stop it as well as bilateral relations.

Syria: Radio Demands Moves To End Lebanon Attacks

JN2004200696 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1145 GMT 20 Apr 96

[Station Commentary]

[FBIS Translated Text] Gentlemen: The region is witnessing an intense diplomatic effort that reflects the world's concern over the progress of the barbaric Israeli aggression on Lebanon and its repercussions on the situation in the region and the world at large and also on the peace process. This is taking place against the background of the serious impact of Israeli state terrorism that was epitomized in the most horrendous and racist massacres against unarmed Lebanese civilians.

The fact that the big powers are making a concerted effort to end the aggression is categorical evidence of the embarrassment felt by the world community headed by the United States, which at first remained suspiciously silent, then advanced pretexts that run against facts and realities; against the nature of its role, which, it was hoped, would be honest; and against its responsibilities toward the creation of a new world order grounded in international legitimacy and relevant UN resolutions. Against the background of massacres

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which easily qualify Israeli officials as neo-Nazis, the dark clouds of Israeli deception promoted by U.S. justifications and the support provided by the pro-Israel Zionist media have begun to evaporate. For the facts created by the bloody Israeli belligerency are too many to go unnoticed and too clear to be obliterated. The most important and serious of these facts is that the Israeli prime minister has revealed the essence of his policy and turned his back on peace in the most flagrant manner. Thus, the peace process has become the first victim of the barbaric aggression, in which the instincts of racism and extremism have been unleashed. By so doing, the Israeli prime minister is attempting to outwit his peers, the war generals belonging to the Labor Party and the Likud. Similarly, the bloody Israeli arrogance has also shown that the Israeli aggression has rehabilitated the logic of war and aggression in the region, which, many thought, had become a thing of the past since the convening of the Madrid conference in 1991. Israel has gone too far in its use of force, in its resort to blockades and starvation, in its bombardment of civilians and perpetration of massacres against innocent people, in its house demolitions, and in the strikes targeting the infrastructure of an independent and sovereign state. This aggressive Israeli conduct creates many problems instead of resolving existing ones. Besides, this conduct stokes rancor and hatred and complicates problems instead of facilitating the achievement of solutions to them. Such conduct aggravates differences instead of bridging them, and exacerbates gaps instead of narrowing them.

It is clear to everybody that by its aggression against Lebanon, Israel has ushered in a new stage of real danger, not only in terms of the damage that has been caused to the peace process, but also in terms of the fact that this aggression came to cap the daily Israeli attacks on Lebanon and the terrorist Israeli practices in the occupied Arab territories. This lays bare the Israeli intentions regarding the subjugation of the region by state terrorism. Israel is attempting to subdue and enslave the region by the concepts of a new Middle East, whose military paws have been uncovered. Israel has taken advantage of the general climate created by the Sharm al- Shaykh conference, and the U.S. encouragement, which undermined the credibility of the United States as an honest partner in the peace process, which now needs strenuous efforts to salvage and rehabilitate, thanks to the aggressive Israeli policy, which knows no bounds or scruples.

At any rate, we expect the world community to shoulder its responsibilities by ending the Israeli aggression and the Israeli arrogance and haughtiness. At the same time, we would like to underline the importance of the world community making moves to make Israel comply with its resolutions, which constituted the bedrock of the peace process. This requires guarantees. This is because when the Arabs responded favorably to peace efforts and accepted the U.S. initiative, which is grounded in the principle of trading land for peace, they proved their good faith. The Arabs were satisfied with the U.S. letters of assurance they received from former U.S. President George Bush. They were also assured by the assurances given by President Bill Clinton, and also by the interest he took in the achievement of a just and comprehensive peace.

Old and new facts show that it is the Arabs who are the victims of aggression, and that it is the Arabs who need various guarantees to have their land and people protected, whereas Israel is seeking guarantees to subjugate the region and its peoples. Syria, which stands on the side of Lebanon in bearing the brunt of the Israeli aggression, believes that it is impossible to accept any formula that ignores the fact that it is Israel which is engaged in aggressions and terrorism, and which occupies others' territory. Israel must halt its aggression and put an end to its occupation. International legitimacy is required to curb aggression, because the world community has a real stake in the achievement of a just peace that would return all the territories, safeguard dignity, and establish stability and security in the region on the basis of justice and equitability. Instead of lending support to the Israeli law of the jungle, the world community must salvage its legitimacy.

Syria: Damascus Reports Warning to Americans Overseas

JN2004141596 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1115 GMT 20 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The United States refused to denounce or fault Israel for the bombardment that destroyed a UN base in Qana, southern Lebanon, which left over 150 Lebanese citizens dead and 300 injured.

In a statement yesterday, a spokesman for the U.S. State Department, Glyn Davies, said: The objective now is to stop the shelling and make the parties acknowledge the need to stop fighting.

The U.S. State Department yesterday warned Americans overseas to be more vigilant in the wake of the growing tension and anti- American feelings in the Middle East.

(Julie Resyde), a State Department spokesperson, said: Although there are several public denunciations of the United States' close ties with Israel, there is no evidence to indicate imminent attacks against Americans.

The spokesperson said the security measures which were tightened at U.S. diplomatic facilities in various parts of the world were somewhat routine.

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Afghanistan

Afghanistan: Rabbani Meets Visiting U.S. Assistant Secretary of State

LD1904182796 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 19 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] This afternoon esteemed Professor Borhanoddin Rabbani, president of the Islamic State of Afghanistan, met Ms. Robin Raphel, U.S. assistant secretary of state.

BAKHTAR reports that at this meeting the country's esteemed president spoke about the Islamic State of Afghanistan's plans for finding a peaceful solution to the country's current issues. The U.S. assistant secretary of state then expressed her country's interest in the restoration of peace in Afghanistan.

According to another report, esteemed Ahmad Shah Mas'ud [former defense minister] and esteemed Dr. Najibollah Lafra'i, minister of state for foreign affairs, also met separately with Ms. Raphel today.

Ms. Raphel arrived in Kabul today to hold talks with the authorities of the Islamic State of Afghanistan.

Afghanistan: Iran's Borujerdi Holds Talks With Hekmatyar

LD1904194796 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1630 GMT 19 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister ['Ala'eddin] Borujerdi has met with Golboddin Hekmatyar, leader of Hezb-e Eslami [Islamic Party], in Afghanistan. At the meeting, Hekmatyar said that his party was prepared for talks with rival groups and that war was the worst solution to the country's problems.

In turn Mr. Borujerdi said that Iranian policy in Afghanistan was to encourage all rival groups to participate in talks aimed at achieving peace.

Afghanistan: Government Forces Announce Recapture of Ghowr Province

LD1904190296 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in English 1230 GMT 19 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Government sources in Afghanistan claimed to have captured Ghowr Province in the course of fighting with the Taleban group in the past few days.

In an interview with the correspondent of the Islamic Republic of Iran's news agency, 'Amrollah, Afghan Defense Ministry spokesman, said yesterday that the Saghar and Tolak districts, which had been controlled by the Taleban group until the end of last week, are at present controlled by the government forces. The Taleban's attack, which had aimed to retake these regions, has failed.

The spokesman denied the Taleban's statement claiming the recapture of some regions in Ghowr Province by their forces. A spokesman of the Taleban group claimed last Wednesday that their forces had succeeded in recapturing all lost areas in Ghowr Province.

According to another report, dozens of Taleban fighters were killed or injured as a result of a local clash in Gardez city, capital of Paktia Province. Last night Kabul television reported that the fighting flared up when the Taleban group attempted to disarm the local people and the mojahedin stationed in this area.

Afghanistan: Taleban Fire 30 Rockets at Kabul; 3 Injured

LD1904185196 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 19 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Today the Taleban group again fired rockets into residential areas of Kabul city. BAKHTAR reports that Benazir's Bhutto's Taleban fired 30 rockets on Kabul city today, injuring three people and damaging several houses.

Afghanistan: Several Killed in Taleban Rocket Attack on Kabul

LD2004171096 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 20 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] As a result of Taleban rocket attacks yesterday and today, four people have been martyred and 15 others injured in Kabul. A mosque has also been damaged. BAKHTAR reports that Benazir Bhutto's Taleban launched a rocket attack on residential areas of Kabul City today. As a result, two people were martyred and 10 others injured. [words indistinct] Yesterday evening, Taleban also fired seven rockets on residential areas in Karta-e Naw [east of Kabul] as a result of which four people were martyred and five others injured. [all casualty figures as heard] A mosque and three houses in the area were also damaged.

Afghanistan: Commentary Blames Fighting on Foreign Interference

LD2004213196 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Dari 1600 GMT 20 Apr 96

[BAKHTAR commentary]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Words indistinct], the BAKHTAR political commentator writes.

The peace-seeking efforts of the Islamic State of Afghanistan to find a sensible solution to the current

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problems of the country have drawn national and international attention. During [words indistinct] of the Security Council, the representative of the Islamic state once again elucidated the meddling stance of Benazir [Bhutto's] regime on Afghanistan. The peace-seeking policy of the Islamic state [words indistinct] drew the attention of all.

The visit of the deputy foreign minister of the Islamic Republic of Iran to Afghanistan and his meetings with state officials was a manifestation of that country's friendly measures in connection with the solution of problems. [words indistinct] The visit of American Senator Hank Brown, and the recent visit of Mrs. Robin Raphel, the U.S. assistant secretary of state, and their meetings with the authorities of the Islamic state in connection with peace efforts in Afghanistan reflect the (?the renewed interest of the world community). The authorities of the Islamic state, during the meetings, welcomed the continued efforts for the restoration of peace and for the solution of problems and insisted that the Islamic state supported all efforts to find a solution to the problems. They also said that the peace efforts [words indistinct] in Afghanistan should take into account the existing realities of the Afghan society and that they should be taken into consideration in the course of a search for a solution.

During all previous missions, the Islamic state said that it recognized foreign interference as the cardinal cause of the tension and fighting in the country and insisted that peace could only be restored in the country when the interference of Benazir's regime in Afghanistan ceased to exist. [words indistinct] So those who try to restore peace could only achieve a desired result when they recognize the interference of Bhutto's regime in the internal affairs of Afghanistan as the cardinal cause of the continuation of war, and use international influence to put an end to it. The future will show what results the renewed interest in the Afghan affairs will produce.

India

India: Pakistani Rocket Explodes Near Poll Rally in Kashmir

BK2004142696 Hong Kong AFP in English 1330 GMT 20 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Srinagar, India, April 20 (AFP) -- A rocket reportedly fired by Pakistani troops exploded Saturday [20 April] near an election rally of India's ruling Congress (I) in Kashmir, as three poll candidates escaped an ambush elsewhere in the state.

The Press Trust of India said the rocket fired from across the border "narrowly missed" hundreds of political activists gathered at the Congress election rally in Kashmir's frontier Poonch sector.

The missile exploded some 600 feet (200 metres) from a school in Poonch's Dalan village, which is less than a kilometre (less than a mile) from the Kashmir border to Pakistan.

Three election candidates, meanwhile, escaped an ambush by Muslim guerrillas Saturday in the state's summer capital of Srinagar, police said, adding that four political activists were injured in the grenade attack.

In another outbreak of violence two other politicians and seven Indian soldiers died in Kashmir on Saturday, the police said.

The soldiers were killed in a gun battle with Muslim militants near Kupwara town, near the Pakistani frontier, a police spokesman here said.

An army officer said the troops had killed six militants in the firefight.

"The gun battle began in the morning and is still continuing," Brigadier P. P.S. Bindra said. "We have killed at least six militants. Many of these militants had infiltrated from Pakistan to disrupt the polls."

It was one of the worst flare-ups yet in Kashmir, India's only Muslim-majority which will go the polls next month to send six MPs to parliament in New Delhi. Indian general elections are due in April-May.

Earlier, unidentified gunmen killed two Muslim members of the pro-India National Conference party in Kupwara town, police said in Srinagar.

The victims were identified as Mohammed Sultan Tantray and Ghulam Rasool Magray. It was not clear why the two were killed as the National Conference has decided to boycott the upcoming ballot.

On Friday, an unspecified number of gunmen stormed into the house of Wali Mohammed Wani, a candidate of the Awami Tehriq party, at Baramulla town, nearly 65 kilometers (40 miles) north of here, and shot dead his brother.

"They asked for him, and not finding him there opened indiscriminate fire killing his brother," the police spokesman said.

The Awami Tehriq is a new political party founded by former Muslim militants and is contesting three parliamentary seats in the Kashmir Valley.

One of its activists was shot dead by suspected guerrillas in Srinagar two days earlier while distributing campaign literature.

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Muslim separatists spearheading a bloody campaign to end Indian rule in Kashmir, which has left more than 12,000 people dead since 1989, have vowed to sabotage the elections, the first in seven years in the state.

Also Saturday, Muslim militants lobbed a grenade at the office of the Awami League party near here, seriously injuring four activists, the police said.

The League has been set up by former separatists to contest the elections.

India: Pakistan Fires Rocket at Kashmir Election Meeting

BK2104083196 Delhi Doordarshan Television Network in English 1530 GMT 20 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Pakistani troops today fired a rocket on an election meeting in Dalan village near the Line of Control in the Punch sector. The rocket exploded about 150 meters from the public meeting. No one was injured.

India: Bomb Kills 12 in Delhi

BK2104082596 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 21 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] At least 12 persons were killed and over 30 others injured when a powerful bomb exploded in a multistory guest house located in the thickly populated area of Paharganj in central Delhi last night. Our correspondent Om Rastogi, who visited the site, reports:

[Begin recording] The intensity of the explosion was so powerful that the whole multistoried building collapsed totally, damaging several shops nearby, leaving a heap of mud, cement, and steel. Twisted building material and glass panes are scattered all over the street. Rescue operations are still going on in full swing. It is feared that some more persons may be trapped under the debris. The whole area has been cordoned off. [end recording]

The injured have been admitted in different hospitals of the city. Some of them are stated to be in a serious condition. No arrest has been made so far. The lieutenant governor of Delhi, Mr. P.K. Dave, visited the site immediately after the explosion. The police commissioner, Mr. Nikhil Kumar, supervised the whole operation at the spot. According to bomb experts, 20-30 kg of lethal RDX could have been used in the blast. Nobody has claimed responsibility for the bomb explosion so far.

India: 8 'Foreign Mercenaries' Killed in Kashmir

BK2104085096 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 21 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] In Jammu and Kashmir, eight foreign mercenaries have been killed at Kumriala near Kupwara town. The killing took place during search operations. As already reported, 51 militants belonging to a banned militant outfit have surrendered along with arms and ammunition to the security forces on Friday [19 April].

India: Toll in Delhi Blast Reaches 17; Rescue Operation Continues

BK2104125696 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1230 GMT 21 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The death toll in last night's bomb blast in Paharganj area of central Delhi has gone up to 17. No arrests have been made so far. The lieutenant governor of Delhi, Mr. P.K. Dave, has announced ex gratia payments for the victims of the blast. According to police, search and rescue operations are continuing at the site and ballistic experts of the Army and National Security Guard are trying to find out the source of the explosion.

Condemning the blast, the CPI-M [Communist Party of India-Marxist] has urged the government to take prompt steps to track down the culprits. In a statement, the Politburo of the party said the explosion in the heart of the capital indicates some premeditated plan to strike terror.

India: 8 Foreigners Among Dead in Delhi Blast; Claims Made

BK2104161396 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 21 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The death toll in last night's bomb blast at Paharganj area in central Delhi has gone up to 17. The killed included eight foreigners. UNI says at least 35 people were injured and that five of them are in serious condition. Search and rescue operations are still continuing at the blast site.

A high-level meeting was held in the union Home Ministry in which the special secretary, Mr. B.K. Jain; the director of the Intelligence Bureau, Mr. D.C. Pathak; and the Delhi Police chief, Mr. Nikhil Kumar, participated. Delhi Police and other agencies have conducted raids in the capital and neighboring states to nab the culprits responsible for the blast. However, no arrests have been made so far.

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According to UNI, the terrorist outfit Harkatul (?Muslemin) of Kashmir and the Khalistan Liberation Forum have claimed responsibility for the attack.

According to ballistic experts, 20 to 30 kilos of explosives must have been used in the blast. Police are examining the debris to look for possible clues. The Delhi Police has handed over the case to the Crime Branch.

India: 'Militancy-Related' Incidents Claim 24 in Kashmir

BK2104161896 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 21 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] In Jammu and Kashmir, 24 persons — including 18 militants and two security personnel — were killed in militancy-related incidents since yesterday evening. Of the 18 militants killed, seven are foreign mercenaries. Five of them were killed at Kumriala in Kupwara sector last night during search operations. Two Pakistani intruders were killed in an encounter with the BSF [Border Security Force] in the Chicken Neck area last night.

India: Nationwide Alert Sounded Following Delhi Bomb Blast

BK2204035196 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 22 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Investigations into Saturday [20 April] night's bomb blast in Delhi in which at least 17 people were killed are continuing. Security agencies have picked up samples of the powerful bomb for examination. Delhi police and other agencies conducted raids in the capital and the neighboring states to nab the culprits responsible for the blast.

According to UNI, the terrorist outfits Harkatul Mominеen of Kashmir and Khalistan Liberation Forum have claimed responsibility for the attack. Meanwhile, a nationwide alert has been sounded as the blast came just a week before the first phase of polling for the Lok Sabha elections begins.

India: 'Miscreants' Bomb Tamil Nadu Railway Station, TV Center

BK2204090796 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 22 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] In Tamil Nadu, Perani railway station between Villupuram and Changalpat near Madras was blasted early this morning by unidentified miscreants. An agency report quoting railway sources said block instruments, which regulate the traffic on the rail track were completely damaged in the blast set off by four miscreants. Railway traffic on the route has since been restored. The divisional manager and the chief security commissioner of the Southern Railway immediately reached the blast site for investigation.

In another bomb blast, a television relay center was partially damaged near Mailadutural in Qaide Millat district early today. Police sources said no one was injured in the blast set off by a country-made bomb. Top police officials have rushed to the spot.

India: Prime Minister Delivers Election Broadcast

BK2104143496 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1607 GMT 20 Apr 96

[Speech by Indian Prime Minister Narasimha Rao; place and date not given; from the "Election Broadcast" program—recorded]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Friends: I am glad to have this opportunity to speak to you and explain to you our achievements in the last five years and promises for the future. In 1991, you reposed your trust on the Congress Party after the tragic assassination of Rajivji [Rajiv Gandhi]. His assassination was a great shock to the entire nation. He had intended to do so much for the country. I am happy that we have overcome many difficulties and put the nation on the path of prosperity.

You would recall the situation in the country when we assumed power — 18 months of non-Congress government had left the economy in shambles. Prices increased as never before. Caste and communal passions were inflamed. Violence and terrorism had intensified. The secular heritage of our civilization was under attack. The financial mismanagement had brought the country on the verge of bankruptcy. Our foreign exchange reserves were barely sufficient to meet two weeks of import. Vast quantities of gold had to be sold and mortgaged. The growth rate had become negligible. There was a sense of gloom.

This was the situation we tackled with patience and courage, bit by bit. Peace was restored in Punjab and Assam. Elections for the Lok Sabha are being held in Jammu and Kashmir. We redeemed and brought back the gold. Foreign exchange reserves went up to an unprecedented rupees 60,000 crores. The economic reforms initiated by us put the country back on its rails. Industrial production has recorded a growth of 12 percent this year and exports have grown by over 24 percent. Poverty alleviation and employment generation programs have reached levels which for the first time promised the elimination of acute poverty and chronic unemployment. Several new initiatives were taken for the welfare of the minorities, scheduled castes, scheduled tribes, and other backward classes. In addition, a

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statutory commission for them, national finance and development corporations have also been set up for their economic progress.

Last five years had been a period of achievements and initiatives in almost all sectors. New programs like the Employment Assurance Scheme, revamped public distribution system, Prime Minister's Rozgar Yojana [employment scheme], National Social Assistance Program, midday meal [for school children], and Mahila Samriddhi Yojana [women's development program] have been initiated for the welfare of the vulnerable sections of the society. The Congress government at the center has fulfilled almost all the promises made in its manifesto of 1991.

All this has been possible because we provided a stable government at the center. A government that is firm and committed to the welfare of the people, a government that has a reason for the future. Our nation's progress needs a political party which represents all sections of our diverse society, a political party which unites, a political party which has the concern and the capacity to rise above narrow and parochial interests, a political party that builds the country.

Friends, only the Indian National Congress is that party. Our manifesto is already before you. It clearly spells out our plan of action. The Congress promises nearfull employment by 2002 AD. Cheaper rice and wheat would be made available to the poor. Indira Awas Yojana [housing scheme] will be expanded to provide a pucca [concrete] house to all houseless poor families.

We would continue our drive for further empowerment of women, including by reservation in legislative bodies as we did in the panchayati raj [rural local body-based administrative system] institutions. Midday meal would be provided for all primary school children. We will continue to pay remunerative prices to the farmers for their produce. The quantum of benefits under the National Social Assistance Program would be enhanced to rupees 100 per month for old persons above 65 years of age and rupees 500 for maternity assistance.

Education will be our particular concern. We would ensure that 6 percent of the country's GDP is spent on education. We would carry forward the momentum of economic reforms and the restructuring of economic policies to achieve higher rate of economic growth, efficiency, and competitiveness in all production sectors and achieve 8-9 percent growth per annum. Rural structural transformation consistent with and supportive of national reform would be initiated. We will continue to cut controls that harass you and the controls that restrict growth and initiative.

To strengthen vigilance, an anticorruption mechanism — a high- power commission consisting of eminent jurists, parliamentarians, and administrators — would be appointed to recommend measures to control and contain corruption and introduce these measures within six months. We would establish lokpal [ombudsman] with jurisdiction over all political offices, including those of the prime minister and the chief ministers. Steps would be taken for the elimination of criminal nexus with influential segments and control of organized crime. The unity, security, and integrity of our country would be reinforced so that our country can continue to hold its head high in the world.

Only the Indian National Congress has an all-India presence. Only the Indian National Congress can provide the momentum and the reforms needed now to (?pull) our country toward higher levels of prosperity and social justice. We once again appeal for your support. Give us the opportunity to continue with our task of the nation building. Vote Indian National Congress for stability, progress, national unity, and secularism.

Jai Hind [Hail India]!

India: Pakistan Reportedly Receives Heavy Water From China

BK1904130296 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1230 GMT 19 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Pakistan is reported to have received 40 tons of heavy water for its nuclear reactor being built with China's assistance at Khushab in Punjab province. Reports from Beijing say the heavy water was shipped to Karachi early this month following Pakistan's Atomic Energy Commission chief, Mr. Ashfaq Ahmed's visit to Beijing in August last year. The Chinese National Nuclear Corporation agreed to supply the heavy water at a higher price than the international rate. In the past, China has been supplying limited quantities of heavy water for the Karachi nuclear power plant. The Khushab heavy water reactor is expected to be completed by the end of this year.

Iran

Iran: Ayatollah Yazdi Delivers Friday Prayers

LD1904140096 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran Provincial Network in Persian 0802 GMT 19 Apr 96

[Second Friday prayers sermon delivered by Ayatollah Mohammad Yazdi in Tehran — live]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. [passage omitted] I wish to

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repeat a saying attributed to [the first Shiite] Imam 'Ali, peace be upon him, on the importance of maintaining an army. He says: Armed forces and troops are like an impenetrable wall which protects the Islamic ummah [community] against the enemy's harm. The enemy will not even think of attacking a state or a territory which is protected by strong armed forces. A verse in the noble Koran also recommends that the armed forces must be strong, not just in wartime but in peacetime too. It says that if we update all the resources of our armed forces, including their weapons and ammunition, to match the requirements of the day, no enemy, even a superpower, will even dream of resorting to aggression against us.

Praise be to God, you saw how our people backed our Armed Forces in the most sensitive circumstances [the Iran-Iraq war]. Our country at that time was facing immense problems. The former regime had collapsed and our system was not yet fully established. Our Armed Forces lacked the necessary order and discipline. Nevertheless, thanks to efforts of the ground forces, the Air Force, the Navy, and the rest, we honorably survived the eight years of holy defense. Our armed forces did not permit the invaders to capture and retain even an inch of our country's territory. [shouts of praise from the congregation]

Today again, praise be to God, as the top-ranking officials of the state — and particularly the commander in chief of the Armed Forces ['Ali Khamene'i] — have said, we are enjoying a high degree of security and confidence. We are so strong today that no major power, no Eastern or Western power, no affiliated power, and not even those who claim to be the leader of the world can ever do anything against us. They cannot even think of waging aggression against us. Even if they resort to another satanic act similar to that which was realized with [Iraqi President] Saddam Husayn's assistance, this time they will receive such a heavy blow that their bodies will end up in graves dug by themselves. [Shouts of "Death to Israel and America"] [passage omitted]

The second round of the [Majles] election is as important as the first round, perhaps even more important. [passage omitted] In some ways, the second round of elections is more important because there is less competition and fewer people are taking part. Sometimes a single vote can determine whether a person gets into the Majles or not. That is why our country's people, the people of Tehran, and those in other constituencies who have to vote in the second round should not think that because they voted in the first round there is no need to vote in the second round. They might think that whether they vote or not, someone will get into the Majles. That is not a proper way to think. It is necessary for everyone to vote because even a single vote can play a certain constructive role. Vote for those whom you know, those you have come to know since the first round, because you have been following the events and have found out which candidates are competent.

The Guardian of the Cause [Khamene'i] has issued his guidelines, so there is no need for anyone to be in any doubt. We are confident that this round of the elections will also proceed satisfactorily, that all our people will take part, and that the Majles will be formed in the most satisfactory and healthy way, as God and his Prophet want it to be, God willing.

Fortunately, you have heard the detailed remarks by the dear Majles speaker, who spoke before the sermons, about Israel's attacks on Lebanon and its beastly atrocities. One really does not know how to interpret these events. Could there still be people who might say that the nature of the this usurper regime is still not clear for them? Could anyone still entertain any doubt about the aggressive and domineering nature of that regime, and the fact that it is not prepared to abide by any law or convention?

What law can allow the massacre of refugees living in a UN camp, that is to say innocent men and women who had sought sanctuary in a safe place out of the reach of the Israeli bombardment. Only the law of violence, aggression, and terrorism condones such an action. What human being can witness these events and not feel ashamed of his humanity and not feel concerned about the world we live in?

This is made worse by the silence of organizations who consider themselves to be the guardian angels of humanity. What is the role of these organizations? It is clear that history is gradually eroding the reputation of these organizations. Why were these organizations formed? The history of their foundation says that they were created to prevent wars such as this, instead of sanctioning and condoning massacres.

I am amazed that the UN Security Council should convene a meeting and that America should then threaten to veto any decision that might be taken against Israel. In general, the right of veto is one of the ugliest phenomena in the world today. This right means the authority to indulge in bullying and thuggery. America says it should have the right of veto simply because it considers itself to be a powerful country militarily and economically. What kind of logic is that? This is just the law of the jungle, where the strongest animal claims the mantle of leadership. However, the world is not a jungle. This is the planet Earth on which human beings live. [passage omitted] [crowd chants in support]

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I think that your slogan of "Death to America" is the kind of death that America will bring upon itself by its deeds, which are gradually destroying its reputation in the world. "Death to America" is not just a slogan.

How is it that America should be so different from other countries of the world. Both weak and strong countries are equal members of the international community. In the Islamic Majles, all deputies are equal, whether they come from Tehran or some small constituency. They all represent the nation. In the United Nations too, one should not discriminate between strong and weak members. The United Nations should shun the system of strong and weak members and s-hould discard the logic behind the right of veto.

What is even a greater cause for sorrow is that the gentlemen in the Security Council just sit around and, despite all their talking, do not dare issue even a simple condemnation. It is really amazing. What kind of individuals are these people? What are their brains afflicted with? How is it that they cannot come forward and say this is wrong? How come they do not have the courage to say that the massacre of civilians is an ugly deed and should be condemned. One is really amazed.

The world understands these issues, however, and will judge your work. The world of today is neither blind nor deaf. It sees and hears you and will judge that you are a bunch of incapable and unsuitable individuals, and you should not be in charge of managing the affairs of the international community. You should leave the field and let others take over. [crowd chants in support]

The era of the reign of the logic of war and thuggery is now over. These things can no longer solve any of the world's problems. All they can create is even more tragedy. [passage omitted]

What do you seek to do with people's natural rights when you resort to war and coercion? You are occupying a country whose people are intent on kicking you out. But not only do you still insist on staying, but you have the nerve to target women and children there with your bombs. How can this solve anything?

You should be absolutely certain that your actions will not only not solve any problem, but will instead make them worse and you could in fact be digging your own grave.

I did not intend to speak at length about this issue, since the esteemed Majles speaker has already addressed these developments.

As I speak, a meeting on human rights is being held in Geneva. A delegation from the Islamic Republic of Iran is there, and this includes some representatives from the judiciary.

Since I have read a report on this meeting and I am aware of its agenda, I would like to say a few sentences in this connection, even though I might be holding you here for a few more minutes.

First, as we have repeatedly said, the human rights issue is a legal topic, not a political one. The mistake of those who use the issue as an instrument for political pressure on a given country will soon or later become clear. This mistake is still being made. The best proof of this is that the report on human rights in Iran, compiled by the special rapporteur, is totally different from the draft copy of the resolution which the gentlemen have written and taken to the meeting for approval. A special rapporteur compiled a report after coming to Iran and meeting and talking with people — both supporters and opponents of the system - and visiting prisons, and yet your resolution is identical to your earlier documents. That is to say, one cannot find even a trace of the rapporteur's document in your resolution.

Now that you have once again compiled a resolution aimed at condemning Iran, it seems clear that your motives are purely political, and you are not really concerned with human rights at all. This is not a right course to take. If you are really interested in the human rights issue, you should not politicize it.

Now to the second issue. As the official in charge of the country's judiciary, I would like to declare that the judicial system governing this country has crystal clear boundaries and is totally devoid of any ambiguity in its structure and function. Furthermore, this system respects all the legal rights of the plaintiff, the accused, the oppressed, etc. It also respects the right to enjoy a defense lawyer, and the right to open and public trials and verdicts. All these are present based on a clearly drawn and unambiguous judicial system.

There are some individuals who enter certain debates and claim that the judicial system here does not correspondent with international norms and standards. I want to tell these people that they should come forward and make it clear which part of the system lags behind those standards.

I even want to make the point here that our judicial system is even more advanced than systems present in some European countries. This is apart from the fact that our system is closer to Islam and the divine strictures. I invite all others with a different claim to a debate; that is to say all individuals who have contributed to the writing of the above-mentioned resolution. I ask them to come forward for a debate and tell us what they

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consider to be faults, shortcomings, or ambiguities in our system. [passage omitted]

How many times do I have to say that in our country there is not a single individual who has been convicted for political reasons, that is, a person who is in prison because of his beliefs. If you understand law, then why do you not comprehend this? There is a difference between those who have committed offenses which are based on their beliefs and those who have certain beliefs but have never committed any offense. A political prisoner is someone who has been imprisoned because of his deviant beliefs. Name a single person whom we have put in prison because of his deviant beliefs. We do not have a single political prisoner. Yes, we have some prisoners who have been put in prison because of certain crimes they have committed — yes, because they have committed crimes, crimes that the Islamic Consultative Majles recognizes as such. Crime has an explanation. Crime is what law recognizes as crime. Not every act can be described as a crime.

I felt obliged to say these few words, but we are almost certain that these words will have no effect because of the way certain people are being influenced politically.

My time is up. We may not be able to perform the prayers on time. [passage omitted]

Iran: Students Urge March on U.S. Embassy To Protest Lebanon Bombings

LD2004112396 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0930 GMT 20 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The Union of Students' Islamic Associations has announced: To protest against the atrocities of the regime occupying Qods [Jerusalem] and to support the tyrannized Lebanese nation, students in Tehran will be marching toward the former U.S. den of spies in Tehran and will hold a meeting there. [passage omitted]

Iran: Demonstrators Outside Former U.S. Embassy Protest Lebanon Bombings

LD2104125696 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 0930 GMT 21 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Protest demonstrations and marches by our people over the recent Zionist atrocities in Lebanon continued today.

In Tehran there were demonstrations for the same purpose. Here is our correspondent with a report.

[Begin recording] [Unidentified correspondent] Greetings. I am reporting from the former U.S. den of spies [embassy] in Tehran. Following the intensification of the bestial Israeli attacks against Lebanon and the merciless slaughter of the Muslim and defenseless people of that country, this morning Basiji, school and university students, and members of Islamic students associations chanted "Death to America" and "Death to Israel" opposite the former U.S. den of spies. I draw your attention to some parts of the demonstrations.

[Demonstrators, chanting] Hizballah struggles, Israel trembles. Woe betide if Khamene'i calls me to Jihad. [words indistinct] Death to Israel, death to America. [end recording]

Iran: Government Declares 22 Apr Day of Mourning for Lebanon

LD2004185196 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1630 GMT 20 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Islamic Republic of Iran's cabinet has declared that this coming Monday [22 April] will be a day of public mourning to express the sympathy felt by the Muslim people of Iran for the oppressed people of Lebanon. The text of the cabinet's statement which reached us a few minutes ago is as follows:

In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. From Him we come and to Him we return.

The Islamic Republic of Iran's cabinet, once again, condemns and denounces the bombardment of the residential and defenseless regions of Lebanon by the criminals of the usurper Zionist regime. This has resulted in the killing and wounding of countless people in Lebanon, especially many women and children. The Zionists' attacks on the defenseless people of urban and residential areas and on women and children have always been denounced by all freedom-loving people of the world. These actions are out of line with all international laws, regulations, and norms. Moreover, the silence maintained by some countries and international forums, makes the brutal Israelis more impudent than ever.

Just as the leader of the revolution mentioned in his message: The Muslims of the world and Islamic governments should defend Lebanon and assist those who are defending Lebanon's nation and government.

Iran: Results of Vote Counting in Tehran Constituency Reported

LD2004131896 Tehran IRNA in English 1305 GMT 20 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, April 20, IRNA — Based on the latest result of votes counted until 14:00 hours local time (09:30 GMT) on Saturday [20 April] in

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Tehran, Rey, Shemiranat and Islamshahr constituency. Seyed 'Ali Akbar Aboutorabi is taking the lead with 351,093 votes in the run-off elections.

The following is the list of the first 28 candidates receiving most votes in the second round of fifth parliamentary elections held in Tehran yesterday.

Name	Number of Votes:
1. Seyed 'Ali Akbar Aboutorabi-Fard	351,093
2. Abbas Sheybani	344,802
3. Marziyeh Vahid-Dastjerdi	301,679
4. Mohammad-Reza Bahonar	292,302
5. Hassan Ghafouri-Fard	285,700
6. Seyed 'Ali Akbar Mousavi Hosseini	282,358
7. Mohsen Mojtahed-Shabestari	276,163
8. Mohammad 'Ali Movahedi-Kermani	256,596
9. Nafiseh Fayyazbakhsh	249,683
10. Ghorbanali Dorri-Najafabadi	245,843
11. Hassan Rowhani	240,958
12. Mohsen Yahyavi	240,142
13. Seyed Mahmoud Do'aei	239,117
14. Soheyla Jelowdarzadeh	235,479
15. Abdollah Nouri	231,108
16. Monireh Nowbakht	220,335
17. Mohammad-Javad-Ardeshir Larijani	209,083
18. Seyed Reza Akrami	208,026
19. Abolqasem Sarhaddizadeh	205,289
20. Mousa Zargar	205,092
21. Majid Ansari	202,620
22. Fatemeh Ramezanzadeh	200,059
23. 'Ali Reza Mahjoub	200,035
24. Davoud Danesh-Ja'fari	200,019
25. Seyed Morteza Nabavi	199,596
26. Seyed Reza Taqavi	194,171
27. 'Ali Movahedi-Savoji	194,161
28. Seyed Shahaboddin Sadr	191,635

Counting of votes in the remaining 1,131 polling booths, out of a total of 3,219, in Tehran, Rey, Shemiranat and Islamshahr is going on.

Iran: Election Results in Constituencies Nationwide Reported

LD2004151996 Tehran IRNA in English 1454 GMT 20 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, April 20, IRNA — The elections headquarters in a statement issued here Saturday [20 April] announced the results of the Friday run-off elections in 12 constituencies throughout the country until 14:00 hours local time (09:30 GMT).

According to the statement 42,016 votes had been cast for Abdolmohammad rastad in [word indistinct], 80,429 for Hossein Zajkaniha in Qazvin (Tehran), 25,917 for 'Abdullah Ka'bi 23,779 for Abdolzahra Harizavi and 21,398 for Iraj Sefati Dezfuli in Abadan (Khuzestan), 64,676 for Qodratollah Nazari in Kangavar (Kermanshah), 71,872 for Seyed Mohsen Najafian and 56,639 for Jalal Hosseini in Zanjan (Zanjan), 22,814 for Qodratollah Najafi in Shahreza (Isfahan), 32,914 for Seyed Mohammad-Mehdi Shahrokhi in Poldokhtar (Lorestan), 41,809 for Hemat-Beyk Moradi in Qasr-e-Shirin (Kermanshah), 150,801 for Esmaeel Jabbarzadeh, 111,777 for Samad Qassempour, 106,361 for Balal Samarqandi, 96,206 for Hamid Baqeri, 93,479 for Hashem Hashemzadeh and 91,064 for Seyed Mohammad-Reza Milani-Hosseini in Tabriz (East Azarbaijan), 92,836 for Amin Bayanak and 77,936 for Seyed Mohammad-Reza Mavalizadeh in Ahvaz (Khuzestan), 59,679 for Seyed Abbas Mousavi in Izeh (Khuzestan) and 68,930 for Elyas Hazrati and 51,808 for Ahmad Ramezanpour Nargesi in Rasht (Gilan).

Counting of votes in 68 constituencies nationwide, where run-off elections were held, has finished and voted casted in another seven other constituencies including Tehran is underway.

Iran: Winner Named in Tehran Province Experts Assembly Elections

LD2104201596 Tehran IRNA in English 1954 GMT 21 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, April 21, IRNA — The national elections headquarters said here Sunday [21 April] that votes in Tehran province by-elections for the Experts Assembly had been counted up with Candidate Seyyed-Mohsen Aqa-Mirmohammad-'Ali Kharrazi getting the highest number of votes and finding his way to the assembly.

There were four candidates for the by elections Kharrazi having got 651,934 votes.

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Tehran province by-elections for the Experts Assembly was conducted along with the elections for the Islamic Consultative Assembly (Majles) last Friday.

Pakistan

Pakistan: Explosive Hurled at Lahore American Centre; No Casualties

BK2204073696 Hong Kong AFP in English 0708 GMT 22 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] LAHORE, Pakistan, April 22 (AFP) — A small explosive device was hurled at the American Centre here early Monday [22 April] by unidentified persons, causing some damage to window panes but no casualties, police said.

An investigation has been launched to determine the type of device, which exploded before dawn, they said.

Police, quoting security guards at the building, said the incident shattered some window panes and damaged some plaster on the external wall. No casualties were reported.

Lahore police chief Tariq Parvez said he suspected the explosion was possibly caused by some kind of firecracker and apparently aimed at causing harrassment.

The American Cultural Centre is one of the most heavily-guarded buildings in Lahore.

Police believe the device was thrown from an adjacent building. They said US experts were also examining the site and more details were expected later.

Last year, two US consulate staff members were shot dead and a third injured in Karachi when gunmen attacked their vehicle in broad daylight.

Since then, security has been intensified at all American consulates and the embassy in Islamabad. The Karachi consulate staff has been reduced in number and visa facilities moved to Lahore and Islamabad.

Pakistan: Spokesman Denies Rocket Attack on Kashmir Election Rally

BK2104102596 Islamabad THE NEWS in English 21 Apr 96 p 1

[Report by Tariq Butt]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Islamabad — Pakistan has categorically denied the firing of a rocket that exploded near an election rally of Indian ruling Congress (I) in the occupied Kashmir on Saturday [20 April].

Asked to comment on a report flashed by a foreign news agency from Srinagar, a defence ministry spokesman said it is another Indian ploy to cover up its own wrongdoings in held Kashmir and justify its future actions there.

The current electoral process has already been vehemently rejected by the umbrella political organisation of Kashmiris — the All Parties Hurriyat Conference (APHC). The Kashmiris are protesting over the process with one voice and engaged in a relentless campaign to foil it. The Indian occupation forces are trying to crush the resistance which has led to several deaths and causalities every day.

The mujahideen are fighting 650,000 para-military troops to end Indian rule in held Kashmir, which has left more than 12,000 people dead since [word indistinct]. They have vowed to sabotage the elections in Valley, which will go to the polls next month to send six MPs to parliament in New Delhi.

Earlier an AFP report quoting Press Trust of India said the rocket fired by Pakistani troops from across the Line of Control (LoC) "narrowly missed" hundreds of political activists gathered at the Congress election rally in Kashmir's frontier Poonch sector.

The missile, it said, exploded some 600 feet from a school in Poonch's Dalan village, which is less than a kilometer from the LoC.

Pakistan: Bhutto Leaves for Saudi Arabia En Route to Bahrain, Syria

BK2204021296 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1300 GMT 21 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto has left Islamabad for Saudi Arabia for an overnight stay. The prime minister is scheduled to fly to Bahrain tomorrow, from where she will go to Syria.

Pakistan: Iranian Air Force Commander Arrives on Visit

LD2004214196 Tehran IRNA in English 2007 GMT 20 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Islamabad, April 20, IRNA — Iranian Army Air Force Commander, Habibollah Baqa'i, arrived here today on a six-day official visit, and was welcomed at Islamabad airport by his Pakistani counterpart Air Marshal Abbas Khattak.

During his stay here the Iranian Air Force commander is to exchange views on issues of mutual interests and joint defense cooperation with Pakistan's political and military officials.

Baqa'i is accompanied by several air force commanders and experts.

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Pakistan: President Leghari Receives Iranian Air Force Commander

BK2204022396 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1300 GMT 21 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] President Farooq Ahmad Khan Leghari has said Iran and Pakistan have very close cultural, historical, and religious relationship which has stood the test of time. He was talking to Brigadier General Habib Baghayi, commander in chief of Iranian Air Force, who called on him at the Aiwan-i-Sadr [Presidency] in Islamabad today. The president said: We should translate our friendship into practical cooperation in economic, trade, and other fields. He said the public and private sectors of the two countries could have joint ventures in several sectors like gas pipelines and oil refineries, construction of roads, and manufacture of heavy plants.

Mr. Habib Baghayi thanked the president for receiving him and briefed him about the ongoing and possible cooperation between the Air Forces of the two countries.

Pakistan: President Meets With Iranian Air Force Head

LD2104175596 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1630 GMT 21 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Brigadier-General Habib Baqa'i, the commander of our country's air force, met and conferred with Mr Farooq Leghari, the Pakistani president, in Islamabad today.

At the meeting with the commander of the air force of our country, the Pakistani president said relations between the two neighboring countries were long-standing, deep, and friendly. He called for defense cooperation between Tehran and Islamabad.

Referring to cooperation between the two countries in various fields, he stressed: Relations between Iran and Pakistan become firmer as time goes by.

Brigadier-General Baqa'i briefed the Pakistani president on cooperation between the air forces of the two countries. He declared Iran's preparedness for greater contact between the two forces.

At a meeting between the commander of our country's air force and Aftab Shaban Mirani, the Pakistani defense minister, the Pakistani side called for the exchange of delegations between the two countries. He said: Such contacts would contribute to the further strengthening of mutual ties.

Baqa'i said the trip to Pakistan by himself and his entourage was a good opportunity for the exchange of experience between the air forces of the two countries.

Pakistan: Foreign Secretary To Visit Russia, Discuss Defense Ties

BK2104121796 Islamabad THE NEWS in English 21 Apr 96 p 12

[Report by Shakil Shaikh]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Islamabad — In a latest bid to acquire sophisticated weapons and hold threadbare discussions on key issues, Foreign Secretary Najmuddin Sheikh will proceed to Moscow in the third week of May this year.

"Islamabad has proposed to Moscow that Pak-Russia talks should be held after the May 14-15 ECO [Economic Cooperation Organization] summit," official sources told THE NEWS on Saturday. The Russian reply to the dates for the proposed trip is awaited.

They said, "Both Russia and Pakistan regard Najmuddin Sheikh's visit as an important development."

In the realm of foreign policy, the main focus of the Pak-Russia secretary level talks will be on Afghanistan. "Pakistan supports the proposal of an embargo on supplying arms to Afghanistan, but it also wants to install monitors at all the main air bases in Afghanistan to check the arms supply from air," said highly placed circles, who added that the foreign secretary will discuss this issue with Russian leaders, besides seeking support from Moscow to settle the Afghan problem.

Foreign Office sources feel that the visit might lead to defence ties between the two countries.

Pakistan's previous attempts to buy Russian Sukhoi-27 aircraft — Su-27 in common parlance — have made no headway. Though originally conceived only as an offensive fighter, it latest version is equipped to play the role of a multipurpose fighter bomber with enhanced deep strike capability (Su-34s). Also, this version has lost none of its original air-to-air capability.

With a price tag of about $35 to 40 million per copy, the Su-27 was first presented at the 1989 Paris Air Show, impressing all with its superior design.

Though Russian authorities have shown interest in selling this or one of the several other versions of the Sukhoi family, Pakistan and Russia have not entered into a deal mainly because of the Indian pressure on Moscow.

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Another major problem in the sale-purchase of Russian aircraft is making payments in cash, which Pakistan can not do for various reasons.

"It will be extremely good for Pakistan to diversify its sources, particularly when Pakistan no longer has an arms supply relationship with the United States," said official sources.

For this very purpose, Pakistan is also negotiating with France to acquire Mirage 2000-5s, a very costly option.

During the foreign secretary's visit, Pakistan might also show interest in acquiring other Russian defence equipment. In Russia, President Boris Yeltsin is the sole authority for approving defence matters.

Apart from regional and bilateral matters, the foreign secretary will also discuss the release of the Russian aircrew held by Taleban. Several other issues concerning threats to the soft under-belly of the Commonwealth of Independent States, trade and economic relations will also come under discussion.

Pakistan: 2 Accords Signed With Tunisia on Investment, Taxation

BK1904010596 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1400 GMT 18 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Pakistan and Tunisia signed two agreements in Islamabad today to promote and protect reciprocal investment and avoidance of double taxation. The agreements were signed at the end of the fourth session of Pakistan-Tunisia Joint Ministerial Commission.

Later, addressing a joint news conference, the minister of state for finance, Makhdum Shahabuddin, and the Tunisian secretary of state for foreign affairs, Mr. Said Ben Mustapha, expressed the desire of the two governments to further promote cooperation in trade, industrial, scientific, and technology sectors.

Pakistan: Indian Delegations Hold Secret Meetings With Rabbani

BK2204031196 Islamabad THE NEWS in English 21 Apr 96 p 12

[Report by Mariana Baabar]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Islamabad — Two Indian delegations visited Kabul early this month and met President Borhanoddin Rabbani and Prime Minister Ahmad Shah Ahmadzai. Neither the Indian nor Afghani media reported these meetings.

These meetings, though not covered by the Indian and Afghan media, were part of a series meetings between the two countries. They indicate an increased Indian involvement in Afghanistan. The meetings on the part of the Indians are apparently designed to strengthen the Rabbani government which has stayed in place against heavy odds.

The first Indian delegation, say sources monitoring the situation in the region, was led by the Indian health minister on April 5. The other one was composed of Indian engineers which met Rabbani on April 2.

Pakistan's policy-makers on Afghanistan are worried about the changing ground realities in that country. Iran, India and Russia have quickly made inroads in Afghanistan with policies that do not run parallel to those of Pakistan. The presence of Indians in Kabul when they had virtually no role in the country during and after the Soviet occupation is even more worrisome for Pakistan.

Even the renewed American interest in Afghanistan, with the high profile visit of US Assistant Secretary of State for South Asia Robin Raphel, has left these policy-makers absolutely unimpressed. Their interests have not crystallised as yet and the US has still not started to use its clout. "Only when it starts saying that it does not recognise the government of Borhanoddin Rabbani would it signify that it is serious," say sources in Rawalpindi.

Commenting on renewed efforts by Iran and Pakistan to formulate polices for future peace in Afghanistan these sources say, "There has been no breakthrough after a small delegation from the Inter-Services Intelligence visited Tehran. Still the fact that we have both kept our channels open is a big thing. We keep on repeating to the Iranians that there is much in our relations besides Afghanistan and they agree."

Pakistan: Governor Claims Indian Involvement in Karachi Situation

BK1904054996 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 0500 GMT 19 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Sindh governor, Mr. Kamal Azfar, has said that peace has been restored in Karachi. Briefing newsmen in Islamabad yesterday, he said the present government had taken a principled stand that violence was not negotiable. Replying to a question, the Sindh governor said the Indian hands in creating law and order situation in Karachi could not be ruled out. He asserted India was doing that only to divert attention of Pakistan from the Kashmir issue.

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Pakistan: Envoy to U.S. Comments on Proliferation Issue

BK2104112596 Karachi BUSINESS RECORDER in English 21 Apr 96 p 4

[Report by Sikander Hayat]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Islamabad — Ambassador Maleeha Lodhi has argued against giving Washington the central position in Pakistan's foreign policy, lending credence to reports of widening divergence over vital bilateral Pak-US matters, particularly the nuclear.

She reportedly told journalists at a media function in Rawalpindi on Friday [19 April] that there was no question of Pakistan accepting non-proliferation regime on its nuclear programme unilaterally. "In this background, the Islamic Bomb is our identity. Which is a unique position in the international community".

Dr Lodhi also held out the assurance that Pakistan has not allowed the installation of American nuclear-monitoring system on its soil, "neither will this happen, and, nor is this possible". She said, both the government and the opposition have complete consensus on the way Pakistan should run its nuclear programme.

Ambassador Lodhi's rather frank exposition of Pakistan's nuclear position has come at a time when the United States has raised its pressure on Pakistan to unilaterally accept the Washington-led Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty [CTBT].

American Senior Diplomat Robin Raphel took up this issue with Foreign Secretary Najmuddin Sheikh in their meeting here last week.

Sheikh later told journalists that he had apprised the American Assistant Secretary of State of Pakistan's concerns about the "scope" of the inspections the CTBT envisages as its monitoring regime to detect that the signatories to the treaty were faithfully carrying out the dictates of the CTBT.

Foreign Minister Asif Ahmad Ali, a few days back, had also told reporters that Pakistan would like to seek clarification about the scope of the CTBT, including what did the framers of the proposed treaty mean by "on-site inspections" and "international monitoring system".

Speaking candidly, Maleeha Lodhi said: "If the United States were a real superpower it would not have put up with Iran's repeated defiance".

"United States may be a powerful country, but it is not a superpower. We need not be afraid of it".

Maleeha Lodhi's remarks about the United States stand in sharp contrast to what Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto has said at a recent news conference.

She prided herself in being able to establish "very friendly relations" with the US which she described as the "sole superpower in the post-Cold War era".

However, the Washington's nuclear policy for South Asia remains unchanged.

Repeating President Clinton's assertion about 1994 at the United Nations, a policy paper of the White House, released recently, says: "The United States seeks to cap, reduce and ultimately, eliminate the nuclear and missile capabilities of India and Pakistan."

There is no proviso in the American policy that the two countries are expected to do simultaneously.

Gary Milhollin, an American specialist on the nuclear programmes of Pakistan, India and Israel, recently wrote that Pakistan need not go for testing of its nuclear device, because the design of the device has already been tested by the Chinese who he alleged helped Pakistan in this.

Then, could it be that Pakistan would not hesitate signing the CTBT provided the scope of the treaty covers only the testing. However, except the political position taken since long that "Pakistan will sign the CTBT only if India does" there is no discussion on this vital issue, which is going to become far more important in the Pak-US relationship in the days to come.

United States expects Pakistan to sign the test ban treaty which is now being negotiated at Geneva.

Additionally, it expects Pakistan to sign a fissile material cut-off treaty which will follow the CTBT.

Pakistan: Prime Minister Views Economic Achievements, Kashmir

BK2204024396 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1300 GMT 21 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto has said that due to the pragmatic and positive economic policies of the government, the growth rate in the country has risen to 6 percent, while the inflation rate has fallen from 13 to 9 percent.

She was performing the foundation stone laying ceremony of the 117-megawatt thermal power station in Raiwind near Lahore today. The Punjab governor, retired Lieutenant General Raja Saroop Khan; Chief Minister Sardar Mohammad Arif Nakai; Federal Minister for

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Water and Power Malik Ghulam Mustafa Khar; and Senior Provincial Minister Malik Mushtaq Ahmad Awan also attended the function.

She said that during her brief span of three years, Pakistan has progressed to a stage of repaying the loans and her government has already paid back $1 billion, which is a great achievement. She said that because of the successful investment policy of the government, the financial closing of nine projects in the energy sector have been completed, while investment in petroleum sector has been increased by 500 percent.

Referring to the Kashmir issue, the prime minister said the present government will continue to extend moral and diplomatic support to the people of Kashmir.

Earlier, a representative of the Canadian firm British Columbia Hydro, Mr. (Robert Deleaux), said the investment climate in Pakistan was very congenial for foreign investors.

Later, the prime minister unveiled the plaque and prayed for the success of the project.

Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka: Government Forces Expand Security Zone in Vavuniya

BK1804122196 Colombo Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation International Service in English 1045 GMT 18 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Security forces have succeeded in expanding the Vavuniya security zone considerably during the past few months without firing a single shot. Security sources said that they have brought an area of about 15 miles in the west of Vavuniya town under their control. It covers about 50 square miles. Civil administration has been set up in all these areas. Police is assisting the Army in maintaining law and order. Sources said that the Tamil inhabitants in these areas have now restarted their normal life free of LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] hegemony. The Tigers, who have lost their influence in these areas, have retreated further north by shifting their main camps from (Ilamarukkupuram) on the Mannar Road to Pulliyankulam last week.

Sri Lanka: Government Launches 'Major Offensive' in North Against LTTE

BK1904053596 Hong Kong AFP in English 0525 GMT 19 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] COLOMBO, April 19 (AFP) — Thousands of heavily armed troops launched a major offensive against Tamil Tiger guerrillas in northern Sri Lanka Friday [19 April] under the cover of an indefinite curfew, defence sources here said.

Infantry troops were fanning out of their forward defence lines in the Jaffna peninsula and moving against positions of the separatist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), the sources said.

The widely expected offensive came on the first anniversary of the LTTE's resumption of fresh hostilities against security forces in what is now regarded as Eelam War III. Tigers are battling for an independent homeland called Eelam.

The defence ministry in a brief statement said the operation code-named "Riviresa II," or Sunshine II, was launched at dawn with an indefinite curfew in the northern districts of Jaffna and Kilinochchi.

"Civilians have been advised to remain calm and to gather at safe places designated by the security forces," the ministry statement said, adding that maximum possible precautions will be taken to ensure the safety of civilians.

In October last year, security forces launched operation Riviresa, which lasted nearly 50 days and ended up with the military taking control over the LTTE's former citadel of Jaffna.

That offensive cost the lives of some 500 soldiers and an estimated 2,500 rebels. Tens of thousands of civilians fled the area and are still living in refugee camps located in the southern sectors of the peninsula controlled by Tigers.

The latest fighting came amid a security alert across the country to preempt attacks by the LTTE to mark the first anniversary of Eelam War III, officials said.

The LTTE pulled out of a 100-day truce with the government of President Chandrika Kumaratunga and marked the beginning of the latest round of violence by blasting two navy gunboats a year ago Friday.

The LTTE is leading a protracted campaign for independence in the island's northern and eastern regions where the two million Tamil minority is concentrated.

More than 50,000 people have died in the conflict in the past 23 years and in the last year alone more than 1,500 soldiers were killed by the Tigers. Rebel casualties were estimated by the military to be higher.

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Sri Lanka: Government Imposes Censorship on Local Media War Reports

BK1904081496 Hong Kong AFP in English 0709 GMT 19 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] COLOMBO, April 19 (AFP) — The Sri Lankan government Friday [19 April] announced an indefinite censorship on local media reports on the military's latest campaign against Tamil Tiger guerrillas.

The information department said all radio, television and newspaper reports on the government's war effort will be subjected to censorship with immediate effect.

"This will not apply to (Colombo-based) foreign correspondents," an information department spokesman said.

The censorship came as thousands of government troops launched a major drive against the separatist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) in the island's northern peninsula of Jaffna.

The government imposed an identical censorship when security forces conducted their previous offensive in Jaffna between October and December last year.

Sri Lanka: Foreign Ministry Denies LTTE's Claims Port Attack 'Success'

BK1904053696 Colombo DAILY NEWS in English 19 Apr 96

[Unattributed report—received via Internet]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Foreign Ministry yesterday exposed the LTTE's [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] tactics of disinformation. The ministry cited the abject failure of the abortive attempt to attack the Port and the LTTE's claims internationally to show that it was a great success.

The following is the text of the Ministry release:

"The LTTE international secretariat in London in two news briefs dated 13th April and 15th April respectively claim that Black Sea Tigers had destroyed three Sri Lanka naval fast attack crafts (FACs) and three supply ships inside the Colombo harbour.

"This report is not only totally false but also a desperate attempt by the LTTE to cover up for the failure of its cadres to achieve their objectives due to the high level of alertness shown by the security authorities of the Colombo Port.

"In addition to a detailed account of the incident issued by the Defence Ministry immediately after the incident the same morning, a group of journalists, including foreign correspondents representing major international news agencies, who were taken in and around the Port area by boat, clearly saw whatever damage caused by the abortive attack of the LTTE. An AFP report filed subsequent to this visit, having made reference to the LTTE claim of having sunk six naval vessels observed that 'however, just after the attack the Ports Ministry allowed journalists and cameramen into the Port where they saw the remains of one suicide bomber and minor damage to two foreign owned vessels and one local merchant ship.' Commenting on the LTTE claim, the report filed by the Associated Press states 'the military denied the report and reporters taken to the scene by the government saw little evidence to support the rebel claim.'

"Such persistent boasts by the LTTE of so-called 'military successes,' not only shows their desperation to justify their military failures, but also reflects an assumption that the international community would be gullible enough to accept whatever line the LTTE chooses to sell, despite independent eye-witness accounts to the contrary."

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